nickelodeon
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*IT'S A BOOK

YOU CAN'T DO THAT ON TELEVISION

THE REBELLIOUS HISTORY OF NICKELODEON

YOU CAN'T DO THAT ON TELEVISION

THE REBELLIOUS HISTORY OF NICKELODEON

nickelodeon™

TEXT BY JERRY BECK | DESIGN BY STRUCK

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NOT FOR SALE

B

DOUBLE DARE

How to Rock

KIDS' WRITES

Wallykazam!

THE MYSTERY FILES OF SHELBY WOO

THE NAKED BROTHERS BAND

AGAINST THE ODDS

SpongeBob SQUAREPANTS

NICK SLIME TIME LIVE

YOU'RE ON!

The Adventures of JIMMY NEUTRON BOY GENIUS

CLARISSA EXPLAINS IT ALL

MY FAMILY'S GOT GUTS

VICTORI

RUGRATS

NICKELODEON GUTS

100 Deeds for Eddie McDowd

HARVEY BEAK

Pinwheel

iCarly

Mr. WIZ

kids Choice NICKELODEON

HEY DUDE

EUREEKA'S CASTLE

SPACE CASES

THE THUNDERMANS

GO DIEGO GO!

nickelodeon BREADWINNERS

FIGURE IT OUT

SAM & CAT

Drake & Josh

WELCOME FRESHMEN

SANJAY AND CRAIG

NICKELODEON ARCADE

BIG TIME RUSH

NICKELODEON WEINERVILLE CITY LIMITS

DANCE ON SUNSET

AWESOMENESS TV

SALUTE YOUR SHORTS

NICK'S WACK

KaBlam!

WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

NICKELODEON THE BIG HELP

the secret world of ALEX MACK

INVADER ZIM

Hi-Jinks

NICKELODEON

see DAD RUN

THE NICK CANNON SHOW

Hi Honey, I'm Home!

UNfabulous!

SPLAT A LOT

BUBBLE GUPPIES

FRED: THE SHOW

ACTION LEAGUE NOW!

MR. MEATY

NICK at NITE

ALL THAT

HOLLYWOOD HEIGHTS

SABAN'S POWER RANGERS SUPER SAMURAI

SEARCH FOR THE FUNNIEST MOM IN AMERICA 2

Popclips

TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES

BUCKET & SKINNER'S EPIC ADVENTURES

the brothers garcia

JUST FOR KICKS

Ren & Stimpy

Blue's Clues

THE TROOP

Wendell & VINNIE

AAAH!!! REAL MONSTERS™

KENAN & KEL

RANGO

The AMANDA Show

FIFTEEN

HOUSE OF ANUBIS

Rocko's MODERN LIFE

INTRO

RUSSELL HICKS

PRESIDENT OF CONTENT DEVELOPMENT/PRODUCTION

It's a cliché to say that Nickelodeon puts creators first.

When you look at the early shows we aired—*You Can't Do That on Television*, *All That*, and *The Ren & Stimpy Show*—it's easy to see the unique energy the creators injected into their stories. But as you keep going through the years and see shows like *Rocko's Modern Life*, *iCarly*, and *Sanjay and Craig*, a pattern begins to emerge.

Actually, a pattern doesn't emerge, if I'm being honest. No two shows to come out of Nickelodeon look, sound, or feel alike. Why is that? Well, it all goes back to letting creators create. Nickelodeon is known for putting trust in show runners to tell their story in a way that lets them be fearless when taking the risks that make their work so successful.

It doesn't matter whether a story takes place deep down in Bikini Bottom, or flying high above the Earth Nation, a great story always grows out of a real emotion without talking down to kids, but instead creating a space to let those emotions flourish. Adventure, joy, fear, love, anger, surprise, silliness—kids swing back and forth through these emotions daily, and our shows and, more importantly, characters reflect that.

Just like no two children express the exact same emotion exactly the same, our shows illustrate these themes in wildly different ways. We have no "house style," no guidelines for show runners to follow. What results is a diverse set of programming that speaks to kids of different ages, backgrounds, and attitudes.

Over the past two decades we've cultivated a studio culture for new animators to take an idea, a character, or a story and allow it to grow and bloom into something that ceases to be mere content, but becomes part of kid culture.

Though this book is a look back at the history of Nickelodeon, it's important to keep an eye on the future. As the kids who grew up dreaming of getting slimed have children of their own, we promise to create new programming that delights and inspires this new generation in the same way as we have over the past 35+ years.

STUDY TH
IF YOU WO
DEFINE TH

E PAST
OLD
E FUTURE

CONFUCIUS 551–479 BCE

From the very start, Nickelodeon had a mission: to change children's TV by setting itself apart from the "eat your vegetables" kids' programming of an earlier era. Ambitious, right? Oh, Nick would be good for you all right, but it wouldn't be because a grown-up *told* you it was. It would throw a flashlight on the future by reflecting and helping kids define their own worlds, with a little kick in the imagination to help them along. And since the future is actually the unfolding *now* (tick-tock-tick-tock ...), Nickelodeon's programming became a living, breathing, *sliming* event that roared into tomorrow and left a gleaming past in its wake.

What started as a small cable channel has since blasted beyond its TV screen origins to become as much a part of life for preschoolers and kids (and their parents) as juice boxes, bounce castles, and sandwiches with the crust cut off. Tweens (what is a "tweenager" anyway?), teens, and even college students quickly joined the party.

Perhaps Nick's greatest idea—the one that makes MBAs shudder and accountants count sheep, and the one with the least amount of control—was to cast the net for freethinking creative people, hire them, then give them the keys to the building. Untethered in a playground where they could unleash their imaginations, these creators have, over the past 30+ years, given Nickelodeon some of the best and most memorable kids' programming to ever hit the airwaves on cable or broadcast television.

Cyma Zarghami, the Nickelodeon president, looks forward to continuing that tradition for yet another generation of viewers. "We're making sure we find people who have stories to tell that are relevant to this generation," Zarghami said.

"Our research has shown there is a real turnover in the kids' audience. The first 30 years of Nickelodeon were spent focusing on the millennials," she explained. "Now the next generation is emerging—8-to 9-year-olds who we are calling, for the time being, the post-millennials.

"We've spent a lot of time studying what's different about them from the prior generation and trying to develop the right content that will make them laugh the way the early Nickelodeon content made the first generation laugh."

A new generation of viewers requires a new generation of creators, and Nickelodeon has never been more committed to bringing fresh, unique talent on board to keep pace with the demands of the present and future. As Zarghami puts it, "we need more ideas, more people, and more sources of content. The people who are going to tell the stories that the post-millennials relate to are going to be the first wave of the millennials.

"People who are in their early 30s and grew up on Nickelodeon want to tell their versions of stories for the new Nickelodeon audience. To see kids who are saying 'I grew up on *Hey Arnold!* but here is *my* show,' or 'I grew up on *Rugrats* and here is *my* idea.'"

A new, original idea morphed from the unique experience of each young creator is the core of Nick's continuing legacy. It is, as Zarghami says, "very exciting to watch."

The influx of creator-driven shows was reflected in the amount of fresh new animated series that began appearing on Nick. In 1985, only 3½ hours of animated content aired each day. By 1995, that number was up to 15½, and Nick's dedication to finding new talent only increased after that. Because tastes evolve over time, Nickelodeon, always looking for the spark of a new entertainment concept, offers a welcoming space for creators to pitch theirs to the network.

For its efforts, Nickelodeon's fanciful programming yielded amazingly far-reaching effects. Today there are millions of adults around the world who still cherish memories of the shows

they saw as kids. Every grown-up, after all, still has a kid inside pushing to get out, and it's a good bet that kid grew up enjoying *You Can't Do That on Television*, *Rugrats*, or *Clarissa Explains It All*. There's nothing better than the nostalgic recollections of childhood, and Nick has provided them to countless grown-ups. It gave a new vocabulary to what it means to be young, bursting with energy, and willing to make mistakes without fear.

Who could forget, for instance, the deluge of sticky green slime that dumped on kids and celebrity stars alike? Who didn't want to spend an afternoon watching *The Adventures of Pete & Pete* with their feet up on Nick's Big Orange Couch? It was like spending a day at the neighbors' house when their parents were away for the afternoon.

And then there was the music. Do you recall singing along with Joey Ahlbum's doo-wop dinosaurs? Or boppin' down the street with George Evelyn's Big Beasts Quintet? Tom Pomposello's "Ni-ni-ni-ni, na-nick-nick-nick, Nickel-o-de-ONNNN!" network theme still reverberates across the decades. How many of us marveled at the surprising number of ways Nick found to put its ever-changing orange logo on display?

Even the execs toiling at Nick over the years remember letting their inner kid out to play. Stories abound of company meetings where participants wore pith helmets with dinosaurs glued to the tops, or used show props as chairs. Execs at times pretended to consult a doll's head glued to a miniature flying saucer when producers came in, or pranked each other with fart bladders. Such inspiration isn't often found in the boardrooms of most Fortune 500 companies.

Nickelodeon had stumbled onto the secret that had been right in front of them: let the kids tell the network what *they* wanted, what *they* thought was funny, and how *they* wanted to be entertained. Focus groups ran off the programming dictates, and in the process of listening to the young voices, something magical happened. The network began to speak kids' languages and launch kids' trends. Nick became more than just a programming block; it grew into a welcome and cherished companion—a meeting place, so to speak—for millions of young viewers.

WE'RE MAKING SURE WE FIND PEOPLE WHO HAVE STORIES TO TELL THAT ARE RELEVANT TO THIS GENERATION.

CYMA ZARGHAMI / PRESIDENT OF NICKELODEON NETWORKS GROUP

Nickelodeon discovered what it was like to live in a kids' world, and the most "Nick" thing about the network was its attitude. Part of the joke was adult authority: in the world of Nickelodeon, adults could be lovable and even respected, but their attempts to control, set rules, and establish an orderly world were usually inept and hilarious. The worst thing an adult could do, in Nick's eyes, was to push authority onto kids who were having fun.

Zarghami and her staff began to understand their audience by listening and observing. They knew that they were dealing with a whole new generational *attitude*.

"What kids in this generation find funny and what their lives are like is very different from kids 30 years ago," Zarghami explains. "They're not as interested in Hollywood glitz and glamour as the last generation was. They like good, clean fun; they're not cynical in any way. In many ways because the world has changed so much, they live more in a bubble than any generation before them. They are very protected so they will stay very close to home and they are devoted to their families in a way that we haven't seen before."

WHAT KIDS IN THIS GENERATION FIND FUNNY AND WHAT THEIR LIVES ARE LIKE IS VERY DIFFERENT FROM KIDS 30 YEARS AGO.

CYMA ZARGHAMI / PRESIDENT OF NICKELODEON NETWORKS GROUP

At Nick, creators and entertainment technologies have a close relationship, one that Zarghami sees growing along with the Nickelodeon brand.

"The new generation of kids is born into this world with all the devices that currently exist, so they aren't discovering the devices, they are going to discover the content that is on those devices. We are making sure that we are developing content that has game play for the game apps and additional content that can live on our branded Nickelodeon app, as well as great content that they are going to tune into on the linear channel as well."

Zarghami makes it clear that creators working with Nickelodeon will have a wide range of opportunities with the kids' network. "We have set out to generate development in multiple parts of the company. Digital is one place, animation is another, live action, international, and great partnerships [are others]. We're bringing content into the house from many places."

Nickelodeon has a mission to provide many avenues for new talent. In 2012, the network initiated an annual animated short film "contest," taking more pitches than a major league baseball season. "It's less of a contest and more of an animated shorts program," Zarghami explains. "The idea is for creators to submit their ideas to be eligible to make a two-minute short from our animation group. We took something like 600 pitches in that first year, then 900 pitches in 2013, and then expanded into our global animated shorts program, an international program. We narrow it down so that we produce 12 two-minute shorts."

It's hard to take a swing at everything, but as overwhelming as these numbers sound, every creator who pitches to Nickelodeon, Zarghami says, has an opportunity to produce a hit. "In the process of narrowing it down, we find things along the way that we put into long-form development. Now that we have the Nickelodeon branded app, we can find a home for the

shorts even if we don't develop them further into television. We have original content populating all the screens at the moment; it's great!"

Part of Nick's mission is to listen to kids. The brand does tons of research in an ongoing mission to create the funniest animation content for the next generation of young viewers, and to find the freshest creative voices from around the world.

Nickelodeon has expanded throughout Europe, Asia, Australia, Africa, Canada, and Latin America. Kids from nearly every nation can vote in their own versions of the Kids' Choice Awards, or avail themselves of every aspect of the biggest kids' brand on the planet. It's a big orange world for Nickelodeon; enjoyment is only a remote button or app wherever young viewers live.

And, as any infomercial will tell you, that's not all. Nickelodeon has also become a global media company that connects to its audiences across all platforms, including digital and multimedia content that encompasses the total range of entertainment possibilities for kids. One great example is a new live-action series *Game Shakers*, created by Dan Schneider, one of Nick's legendary hit-makers. Two 12-year-old girls team up with rapper Double G to create a fantastic gaming business. The games seen on the show are actually available through apps, and also online. It's an incubator for new ideas, all generated from Nick audiences.

Nickelodeon had long been noted for its prestigious Kids' Choice Awards program, an annual event that throws together celebrities, stars, and surprises in a format that flips predictable awards shows on their ear. Nick's next step was the Kids' Choice Sports Awards, produced by Fox football analyst, two-time Super Bowl champion, and Hall of Famer Michael Strahan. Strahan hosted the first annual event, featuring sports stars and celebrities such as Larry Fitzgerald, Dwayne Johnson, Tony Hawk, Megan Fox, and Tony Durant.

The present and immediate future will be some of the most exciting in Nickelodeon's storied history. New live-action and animated series, as well as theatrical features, are set to join the hit shows that have made Nickelodeon an institution, albeit one that's led by the people it serves.

2015 saw the return of Nick megastar SpongeBob SquarePants to the big screen, this time in a computer-generated feature. This hit sequel, *Sponge Out of Water*, topped $160 million in box office earnings and proved that SpongeBob is still one of the biggest draws in animation. Audiences and reviewers responded with unabashed enthusiasm, making *Sponge Out of Water* one of the most acclaimed films of the year.

Nick's live-action shows are reshaping the new era by putting a twist on the Nick teen sitcom. *Bella and the Bulldogs* portrays the life of Bella Dawson, a lively teen girl, her BFFs both male and female, and a high school full of romances and rivalries. Bella also happens to quarterback the football team and has an arm strong and accurate enough to lead them to victory. Gabriel Garza and Jonathan Butler, two graduates of Nickelodeon's in-house writing program, created the show.

After a successful partnering that produced several well-received theatrical movies, Nick and Paramount's television division will be teaming up for the first time; a TV adaptation of the hit movie *School of Rock* is ready to rumble in 2016.

Of course, Nickelodeon also means animation, and lots of it. One of the most anticipated shows of the new era is one that was developed by veteran comic book artists working on *Nickelodeon Magazine* (now called *Papercutz*). *Pig Goat Banana Cricket* is proof that creators have many areas in which to showcase talent. This comic-to-animation crossover is the brainchild of Dave Cooper and Johnny Ryan. Once again, Nick has come up with a show that looks like no other; the animation recalls the zany, manic style of the 1930s with a post-millennial vibe.

NICKELODEON HAS ALSO BECOME A GLOBAL MEDIA COMPANY THAT CONNECTS TO ITS AUDIENCES ACROSS ALL PLATFORMS, INCLUDING DIGITAL AND MULTIMEDIA CONTENT THAT ENCOMPASSES THE TOTAL RANGE OF ENTERTAINMENT POSSIBILITIES FOR KIDS.

The animated shorts program proved its worth yet again when the new animated series *The Loud House* was greenlit for the new era. First-time creator Chris Savino sold the network on a show about 11-year-old Lincoln, the only boy growing up in a household that includes 10 sisters of various ages and temperaments. Eleven other finalists from this year's program are also expected to find some path into the development pipeline, solidifying the network's position as a hothouse that seems to grow unique, independent creators.

Nickelodeon hasn't forgotten the experience (and track records) of established creators. C.H. Greenblatt, a veteran writer of *SpongeBob SquarePants* and creator of the animated series *Chowder,* has his newest work featured on Nick. *Harvey Beaks* is a new series about a tiny strait-laced bird and the fun-loving imps who drag him into wild and surrealistic adventures in a mythical forest.

Nickelodeon has always been a leader in finding and promoting talent for pre-school programming as well. Since the launching of Nick Jr. in 1989 and its subsequent revamping in 1994, entertaining and educating the younger set has been a special mission of the kids' network, leading to acclaimed series such as *Dora the Explorer* and *Blue's Clues.*

Nick's latest preschool entry, *Shimmer and Shine,* is the story of twin genies who are, of course, terrific at granting wishes. Sort of. They're actually still in training, and their goodhearted attempts to make dreams come true for cute young Leah seem to continually go off the rails. Luckily, Leah is a smart little problem solver on her own, and the audience gets to share the fun in this educational romp. Creator Farnaz Esnaashari-Charmatz stresses the lessons of how to learn from mistakes and do better on the next try, which seems to echo part of the Nick mission itself.

Also for the cookies-and-juice-box set is *Fresh Beat Band of Spies*, a fun-filled spinoff of the popular series featuring the Fresh Beat Band. This time, Kiki, Marina, Twist, and Shout are in the undercover spy game. The series presents mysteries and develops problem-solving skills. *The Fresh Beat Band* creators Nadine van der Velde and Scott Kraft are at the helm.

So, the "mission" of the past now pushes into the future in new shows that reflect the novel content Nick has lined up for its young audiences. The brand is already searching for the next fresh concept, new platform, and next wave of talented creators. It is great ideas—rather than individual executives, stars, or characters— that will blast the kids' network into the next decade and beyond.

Nickelodeon has led the kids' programming pack for more than 30 years, and isn't about to give up its post position. On the following pages, you'll learn how Nick began, grew, where it is today, and where it will meet its audience at the next intersection—the corner of Entertainment and Anticipation.

Perhaps Russell Hicks, president of content development and production, puts it most simply. "Wherever kids are going," Hicks says, "Nick will be there."

Confucius himself probably couldn't agree more.

PLUS
MINUS

WITH A YOUTHFUL TILT

ERA

1

PAGES 16–35

NICK-NACK NO. 313

"Gotcha Last!" Pinwheel's perky puppet pair may have been best friends, but their frantic games of "tag" could get quite competitive.

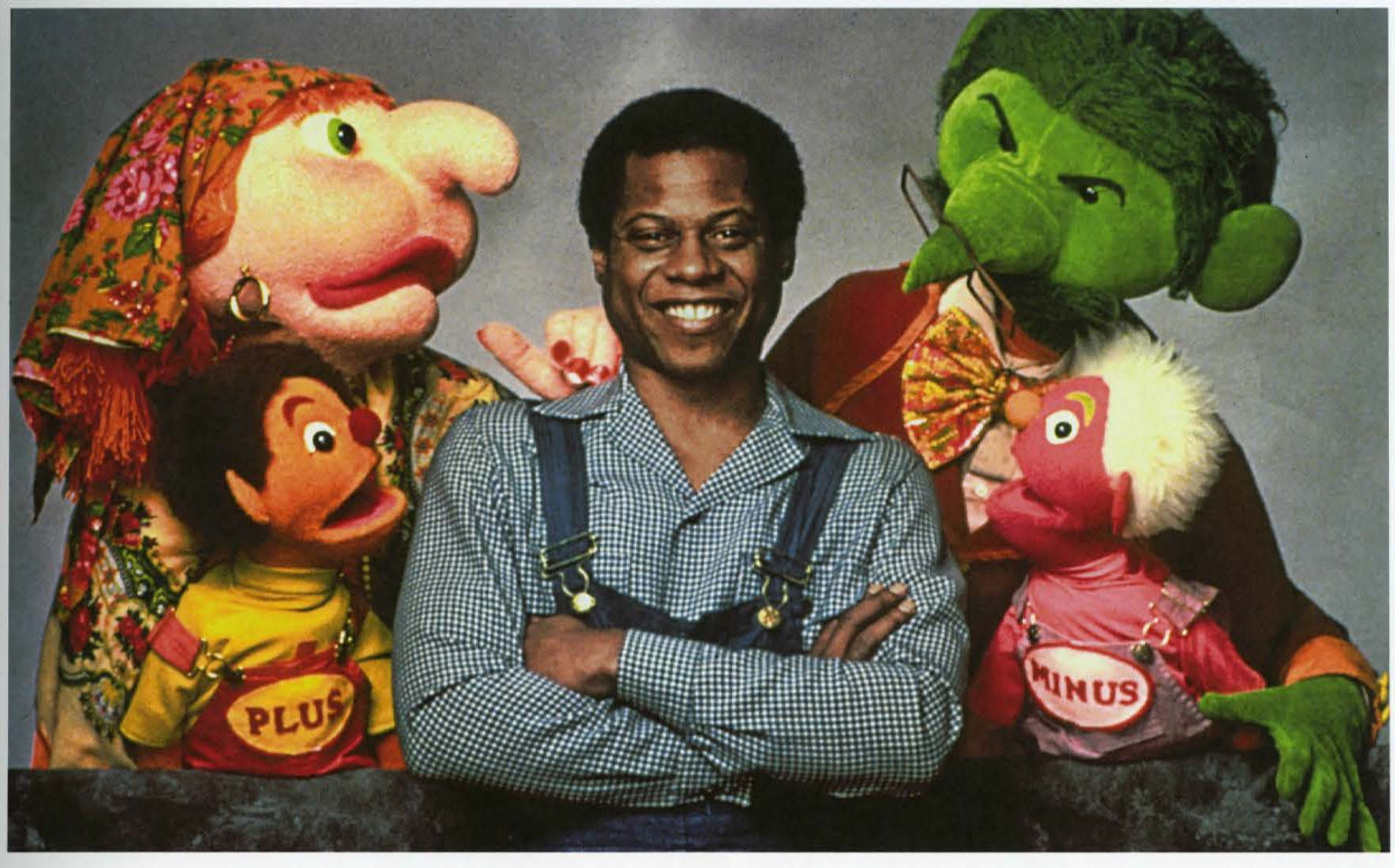
IN THE BEGINNING, THERE WAS QUBE, ONE OF THE VERY FIRST INTERACTIVE CABLE TV SYSTEMS, OWNED BY THE WARNER CABLE COMPANY. ITS FIRST HOME WAS IN A REMODELED APPLIANCE STORE. WE'RE TALKING EARLY CABLE TV.

Based in the college town of Columbus, Ohio, QUBE had a youthful tilt from the start. When the new children's network first aired on December 1, 1977, it was called Pinwheel, and was more of a concept channel than a formal program or series. Pinwheel plied its primitive trade on channel C-3 of Warner Cable's QUBE cable box. Warner believed that a network devoted to nothing but kids' programming might later prove to be a selling point to larger markets. No one at the time could have predicted that this tiny, obscure channel would someday rule cable TV.

NICK-NACK NO. 173

A short-lived cable TV experiment in the 1980s called QUBE evolved into a beloved, multinational network for kids only. Here is the original cast of *Pinwheel* in Nick's earliest days.

PINWHEEL
260
EPISODES



*Pinwheel

NICK-NACK NO. 937

Pinwheel had a mammoth 260-episode run from 1977 through 1989, representing the most episodes of any Nickelodeon show to date.

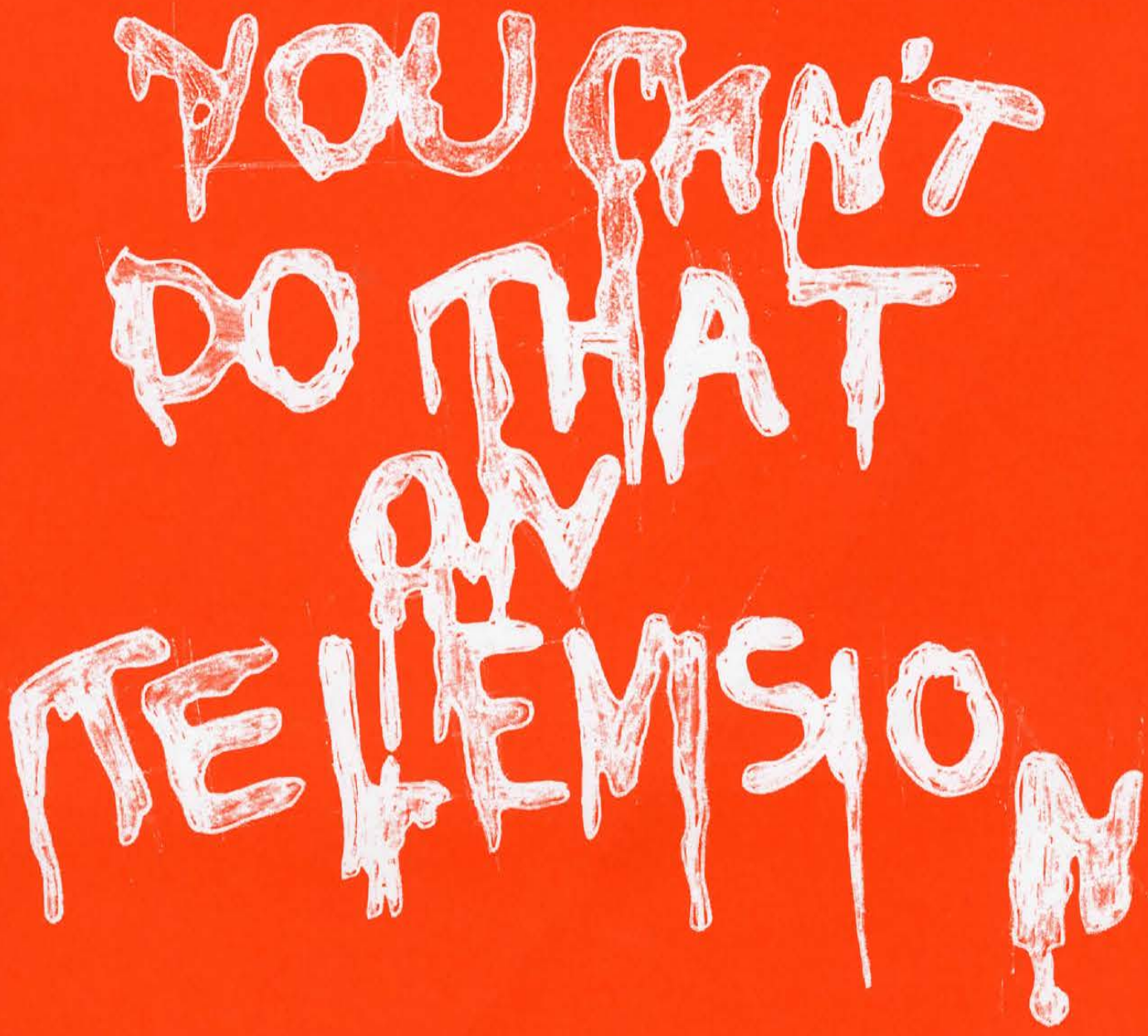
NICK-NACK NO. 263

Pinwheel boasted an amazing array of animation, mainly European cartoon series, that exposed U.S. children to styles of animation and characters that would have otherwise remained unseen. Among them, Paddington Bear made his American debut on *Pinwheel*.

There wasn't really much to Pinwheel; live actors and puppets congregated around Pinwheel House, an old Victorian mansion topped by a large pinwheel. Pinwheel followed the template created by *Sesame Street*. There were obligatory messages about sharing, friendship, as well as lessons about counting and the alphabet.

The puppets, led by "Plus" and "Minus," are a happy but typical bunch. Ebenezer T. Squint is a green critter who longs for fame. Silas the Snail takes an entire episode to cross the screen. Aurelia, a peppy young girl, is the proprietor of Pinwheel House. Chief among the humans are the perpetually smiling Jake and Kim who costar with Sal and Smitty, two friendly senior citizens who publish the town newspaper.

Since there wasn't much else on the channel, Pinwheel often ran in five-hour blocks—almost half of the station's daily broadcast time. Pinwheel was non-commercial, so 260 episodes were produced in order to fill the vast amount of airtime needed. Pinwheel did have one redeeming feature, even if the market was too small for most people to see it. A slew of five-minute animated shorts, some of them from Europe, aired on the show. The renowned National Film Board of Canada produced many of them.



Pinwheel's first broadcast aired when only 16% of American homes had cable TV, and most of these were in remote areas where regular TV signals were difficult to receive. Technological advances and growing cable markets would soon change that.

In 1979, Pinwheel was rebranded as Nickelodeon. The following year, advertising executive Cy Schneider was brought in to redevelop the channel, expand its base, and give the kids' network an identity. Schneider began by adding a heavy dose of live-action programming to the network, including *Reggie Jackson's World of Sports, Livewire* (a CableACE Award-winning kids' talk show with a live audience and musical guests like the Ramones and REM), *Mr. Wizard's World,* and other informative shows. One Canadian import, though, would be of strategic significance to Nick's future: *You Can't Do That on Television.*

NICK-NACK NO. 523

The show that brought slime to Nickelodeon. *You Can't Do That on Television* also put kids first by using hilarious lampoons of the grown-up world. The kid stars even had veto power over the show's skits if they didn't find them sufficiently funny. The show aired five times per week and established the live-action skit format that Nick would feature in its future variety shows. *You Can't Do That on Television* was also notable for launching the career of alternative rock star Alanis Morissette.

BARTH
EAT PUKE AT BARTH'S
BARTH'S BURGERY
HORRIBLE FOOD AT BARTH'S
STINKS

Nickelodeon was still non-commercial. The time between programs was filled by interstitials, one of which starred a performing mime. Cable subscriptions weren't making ends meet, so in 1983 Nickelodeon began funding its programming through corporate underwriting. By the following year, however, the network began to accept commercial sponsorship.

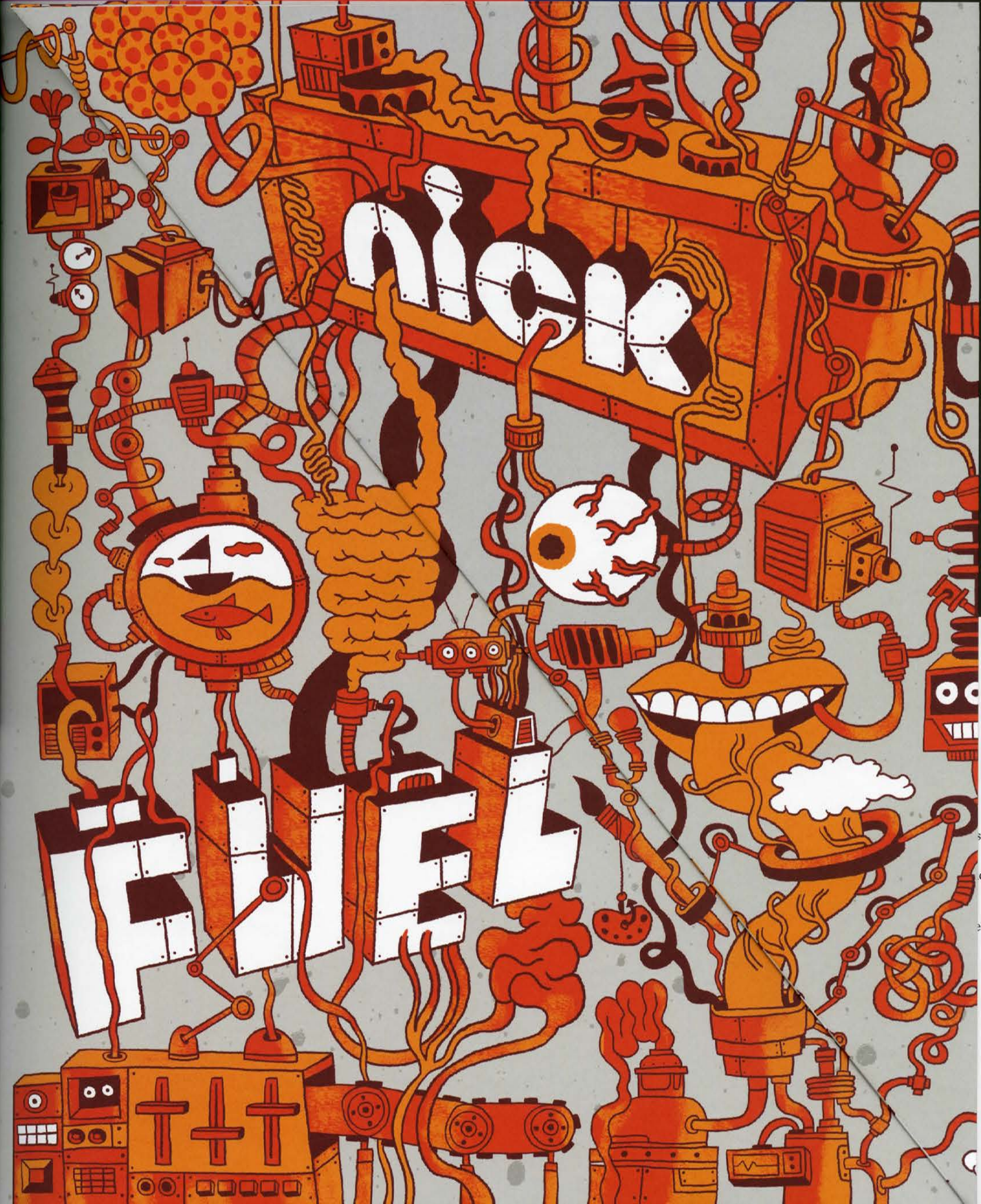
Nick was soon drawing rave reviews and Peabody Awards for its quality programming while other networks were showing animated series based on toys or live-action TV shows. In 1985, Warner Cable divested itself of Nickelodeon (and MTV) to Viacom. Still, there was a huge problem: Nickelodeon was regarded as the "Green Vegetable Network"—good for kids, but not very much fun. Adults admired Nick, but kid audiences were bored ... and dropping out.

Bob Pittman, who was MTV's CEO and in charge of Nickelodeon, had another problem: Nickelodeon had become a part-time network. Nick was sharing broadcast time with the Arts and Entertainment channel (A&E). In 1985, Arts and Entertainment spun off into a separate channel, leaving Nickelodeon with hours of dead time filled by a test pattern. Pittman turned to program manager Geraldine (Gerry) Laybourne to come up with a solution to both problems.

Laybourne teamed up with Fred Seibert and Alan Goodman's consulting service, Fred/Alan Inc. The three executives set the stage for Nickelodeon to become not only a network but also a brand of its own. Fred/Alan decided that "classic" TV shows, cheaply acquired, could fill the empty space. And so, on July 1, 1985, Nick at Nite was born.

The first property acquired was 200 episodes of *The Donna Reed Show,* a family sitcom that originally ran from 1958–1966. Dozens of classic series were to follow, many of them off the air for 20 (or more) years. Kids loved discovering "lost" eras of TV programs, and adults were thrilled at nostalgic memories of shows long gone.

Later, movies, specials, and TV episode "marathons" would be added to the programming. Gerry Laybourne had her first great success with Nick at Nite; it would not be her last.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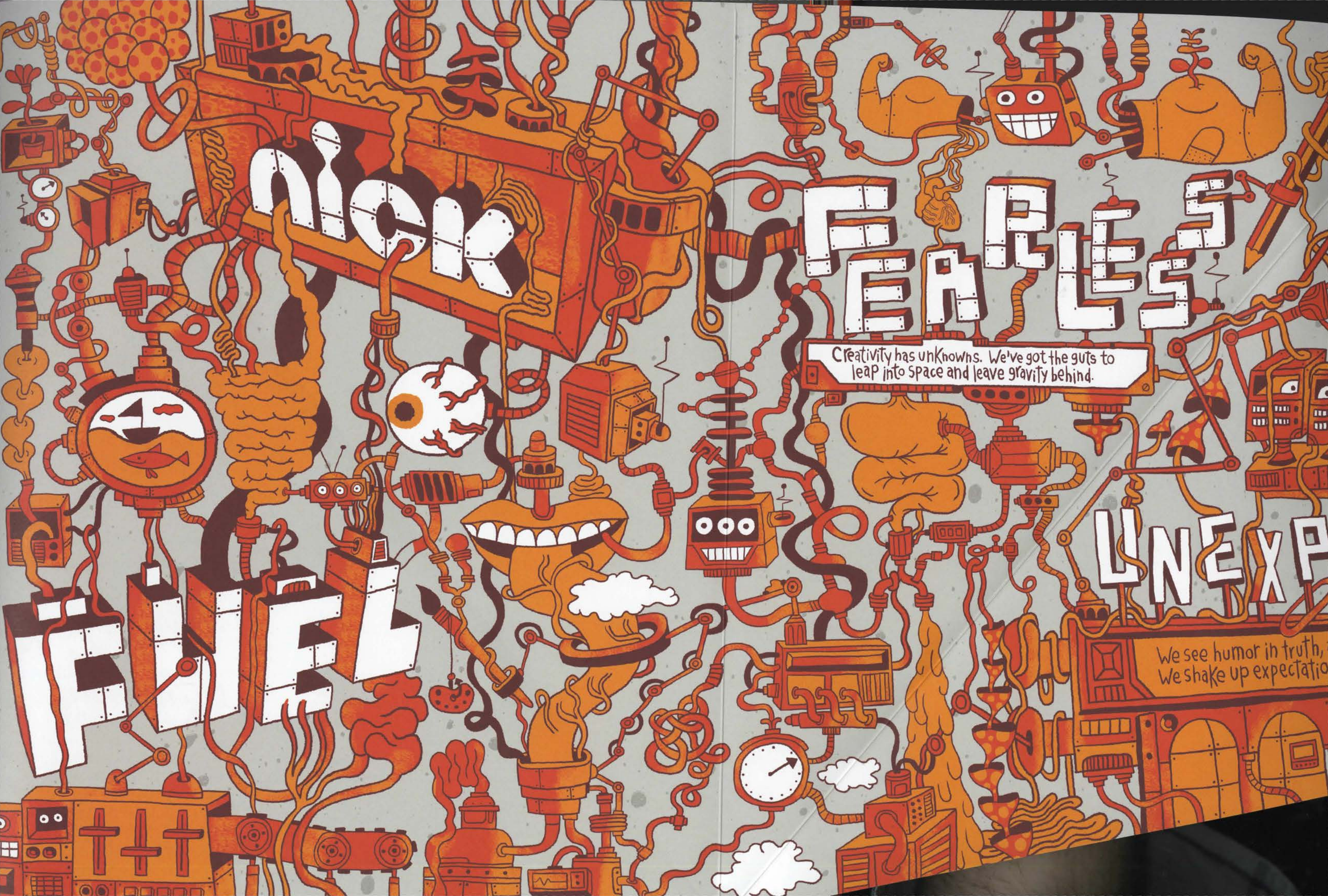
FUEL


nick
FEARLESS
Creativity has unknowns. We've got the guts to leap into space and leave gravity behind.
FUEL
UNEXP
We see humor in truth,
We shake up expectatio

ARLESS
ns. We've got the guts to
leave gravity behind.
UNEXPECTED
We see humor in truth, and smarts in humor.
We shake up expectations through the funny.
CREATOR
DRIVEN
We trust our people to create. At Nick,
the creators – not the suits – run the show.
OPEN
MINDED
We say yes instinctively. New ideas will get a star
On your forehead, not detention after school.
Rebellious
Bending the rules doesn't come from conformism.
We question the norm and aren't afraid to ruffle some feathers.

NICK

Nick

nick

Nick-e-lo-deon

SHAPE

NICK-NACK NO. 023

Tom Corey designed the ever-changing Nickelodeon logo. One rule was constant: It had to be orange, but not something that was orange in real life. The logo assumed many different shapes, but always stood for "Nickelodeon."

SLIME

ORANGE 021

Part of rebranding the network included a new Nickelodeon logo, which rarely appeared in the same form twice. The logo might appear in the shape of a boat, a blimp, or a formless splat, but there was one constant: graphic artists Tom Corey and Scott Nash adopted the color Pantone® Orange 021 as Nickelodeon's official hue. This color continues to signify Nickelodeon even today.

Nickelodeon's other iconic creation, green slime, was a lasting legacy of *You Can't Do That on Television*. The show consisted of a series of comedy sketches; anyone who dared utter the words "I don't know" during any sketch got an instant dousing from above with slick green slime. The network soon trademarked the gooey substance under the name "Nickelodeon Slime." The infamous green slime soon escaped the boundaries of its original series, as we shall see.

As Fred Seibert notes on his website The Fred/Alan Archive, "I ... told them while we [Seibert and Goodman] didn't know anything about kids' programming, we knew that the offices of Nickelodeon were as quiet as a chapel (as one of the internal wags put it) and that in order to spice the place up we hoped that when our jobs were done, they'd all be shooting spitballs at each other."

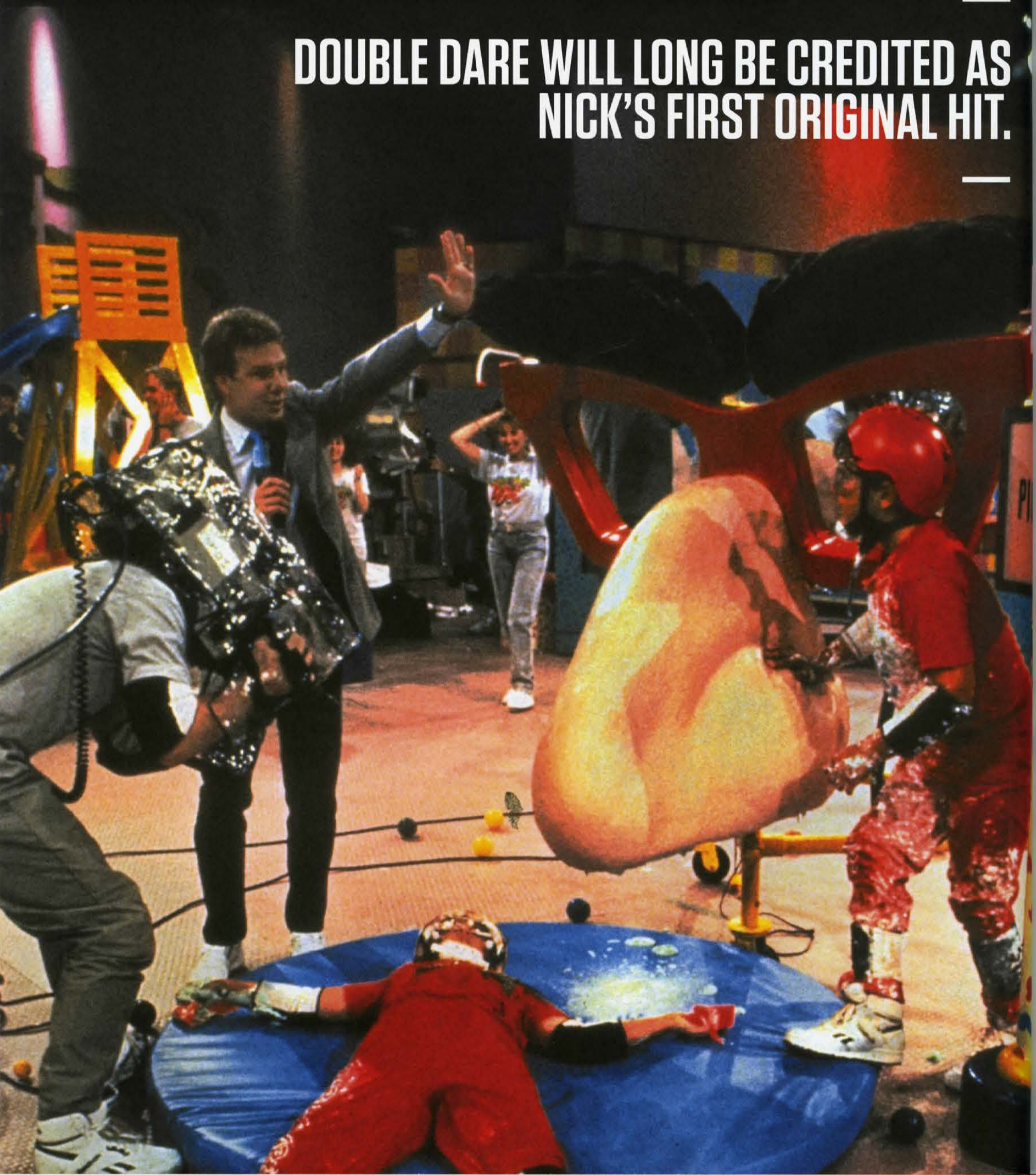
Scott Webb, Nick's first creative director, helped Seibert rebrand the network. In his opinion, "There are two people who really should be counted along with Fred here. One is Tom Pomposello, who helped come up with our sound identity with the doo-wop, which helped us communicate a lot of our attitude and was the foundation for a lot of our animation identity as well.

"The other person is Tom Corey, who designed the Nickelodeon logo. Tom Corey really understood these ideas about designing a logo that could be as expressive as kids were and as flexible a design as we could keep fresh. Whenever we put it on air, we always wanted to make it like a big sticker and kind of in your face. Lime green and orange were the two colors that Tom Corey proposed, because they are both international distress colors. They're attention-getting."

NICK-NACK NO. 499

Geraldine Laybourne recalls that every graphic designer Nick worked with in their first three years considered Pantone® Orange 021 the ugliest color available, but it eventually became the most unique symbol of the Nick brand.

DOUBLE DARE WILL LONG BE CREDITED AS NICK'S FIRST ORIGINAL HIT.



Nick was now enticing more kids, but Laybourne knew the network could be even better. Her next big step was a piece of original network programming called *Double Dare* that premiered on October 6, 1986. This seemingly simple game show began Nickelodeon's ascension to the world's number one network for kids.

Double Dare features two competing teams of kids with one side dressed in blue uniforms while the other team wears red. Host Marc Summers, one of the most popular game show hosts in TV history, begins the show by asking one team a trivia question. A correct answer wins the team $20 and continued control of the round. If the team is stuck, they can "dare" the other team to provide the answer for twice the winnings.

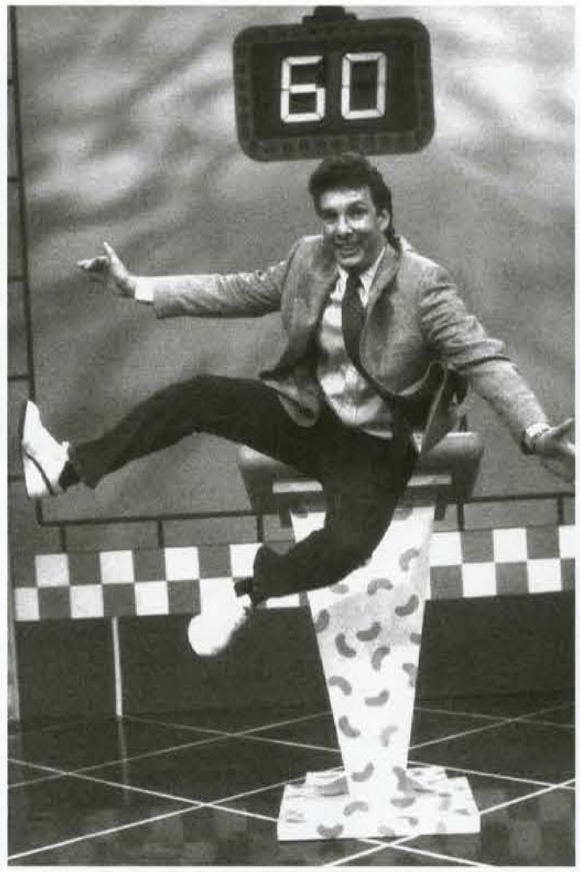
Of course, the other team can respond with a "Double Dare." That means its opponents can attempt to answer the question for $80—or take a physical challenge. These challenges are often ridiculous, outlandish, and often messy and gross. Oh, and they usually had to be completed within 30 seconds!

Catching eggs between cymbals while blindfolded, wading through pools of food to find objects, spraying teammates with whipped cream or chocolate syrup and cleaning them up again, or catapulting messy pies into a pair of oversized pants were all part of the surprise possibilities.

Balloons filled with chocolate syrup were dropped onto players wearing pin-studded hats. Other lucky contestants played musical instruments while their partners filled cups placed on their heads with overflowing muck. There seemed to be no end to the messy embarrassments, and the kids at home ate them up.

The final segment of the show featured an obstacle course race. Eight challenges faced the contestants. Retrieving an orange flag from each obstacle was rewarded with a cash prize. The obstacles, of course, were as sloppy and gross as the other physical challenges. If team members completed the course in 60 seconds or less, the grand prize was theirs. This could be an exciting trip, or even a car.

The combination of kids, competition, gross-out fun, and Marc Summers made the show a breakout success. *Double Dare* was the embodiment of the Nick attitude at its messiest and most subversive. It continued to evolve through several incarnations over the years, but it will long be credited as Nick's first original hit.



NICK-NACK NO. 733

Nick's megahit game show was a perfect example of how kids ruled the network. Every gross, slimy, and ridiculous challenge was preapproved and pretested by the kids themselves.

NICKELODEON
Kids' Choice awards
2001

NICKELODEON
KIDS' CHOICE
awards
'02

NICKELODEON
KIDS' CHOICE
AWARDS 2003

NICKELODEON
Kids' Choice Awards
2004

NICKELODEON
Kids' Choice
AWARDS
'05

NICKELODEON
KIDS'
CHOICE
AWARDS
06

NICKELODEON
KIDS' CHOICE
AWARDS 2007

NICKELODEON
KIDS'
CHOICE
AWARDS
2008

NICKELODEON
KIDS'
CHOICE
AWARDS
2009

KIDS'
CHOICE
AWARDS
2010

nickelodeon
KIDS'
CHOICE
AWARDS
2011

nickelodeon
KIDS'
CHOICE
AWARDS
2012

NICK-NACK NO. 881

The Nickelodeon Kids' Choice Awards is a special, celebrity-filled event held every year since 1988. Each awards show has its own unique and colorful logo.

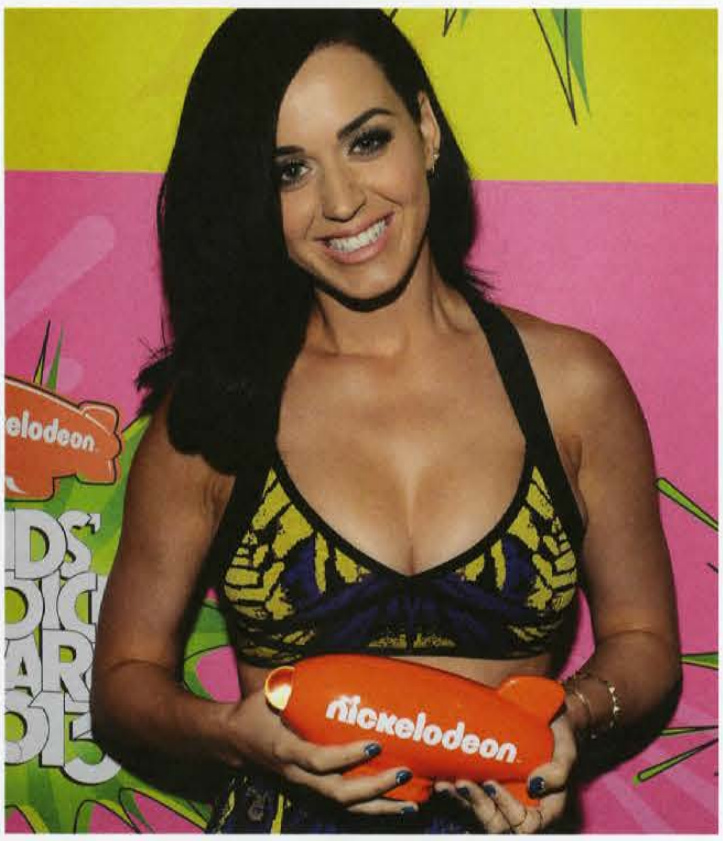
It was always Nickelodeon's philosophy that kids came first. One of the edicts was, in fact, to "ban the word 'fun' from the Nickelodeon vocabulary."

As Seibert remembers (from the Fred/Alan Archive), "Every network promo told the kids that Nickelodeon was fun. It wasn't. We thought it was better to be 'fun' than [to] say 'fun.'" In treating the network like an exclusive club where membership was granted only to kids, Nickelodeon made the audience's choices equal to those of any adult. In 1988 Nickelodeon reinforced this attitude by introducing the Kids' Choice Awards, a 90-minute version of the Oscars for kids only. They had the votes, the power, and the green slime to prove it.

Kids originally sent in votes by mail. Nickelodeon, with an eye on how quickly kids adapt to changes in technology, set up a 900 number line for voting, then an online voting site, and later, voting by mobile phones and texts. The 1988 show featured categories for favorite actors and actresses in both TV and movies, along with favorite movie (and TV show). Favorite cartoon was another important category.

The first winners of the coveted Orange Blimp for their film performances were Eddie Murphy and Whoopi Goldberg. Favorite TV performers were Michael J. Fox and Alyssa Milano. *Beverly Hills Cop II* won favorite movie, and *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* took favorite cartoon. The kids' favorite TV show was *Alf.*

The awards are still an annual event on Nickelodeon, followed by a special presentation of a live-action or animated show that the network will soon debut. Over time, the format, hosts, and categories changed. Musical acts and celebrity "slime stunts" added to the fun, but two things remained constant. During Nickelodeon's annual Kids' Choice Awards, some of Hollywood's most famous actors and glamorous actresses were unexpectedly "slimed" while making award presentations. So were popular athletes, musicians, singers, and celebrities of every sort. No one was safe at the podium. The hilarious sight of a designer-clad star or well-coiffed celebrity gleefully dumped on with green slime became a lasting signature of the awards. The other constant? Kids, and only kids, had the vote.



NICK-NACK NO. 461

The annual awards show evolved from an earlier project called *The Big Ballot*. With 10 awards, actor Will Smith is the all-time vote-getter on the Kids' Choice Awards. Canadian Nick fans were given "voting rights" in 2009. Beginning in 2013, kids could even vote for their favorite app!

Kids Choice NICKELODEON

NICKELODEON HEADQUARTERS

NEW YORK, NEW YORK

USA

April 12 1987 INTERVIEWEE Geraldine Laybourne

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1. Talk about your first experience with Nickelodeon, and the role you played in its development as a "kids first" network.

Nickelodeon was started by a consortium of Warner and American Express called Warner Amex. I had been an independent producer before I started with them. They hired me in their first year of existence as program manager. Nickelodeon was just a venue at that time. They had five shows on the air that ran in a loop. There were no commercials and a mime filled in time between programs. It was very primitive.

In 1984, we started working with Fred Seibert and Alan Goodman — both very instrumental in creating MTV — and started with the assumption that we were going to create a home base for kids. We were crazy about kids and we thought they deserved the best. Our single-minded goal was, "How do we get to be first choice with kids?"

We clearly had to be on their side and they told us clearly that they didn't want to be told what was fun or funny. Maintaining our integrity meant we couldn't sell kids out. We needed to stay true to them. I had a lot of theories. One was to involve kids in the process. And another was to introduce new creative voices. We had these crazy theories that if you wanted to work at Nickelodeon, you had to love kids and do the best for them.

2. What were the most instructive things you learned?

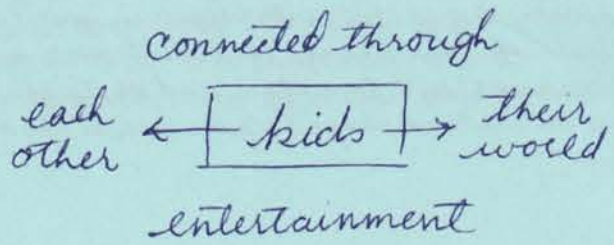
We had a focus group with kids in 1982-83 that shocked us. We asked them what they liked about being kids. They told us they liked being kids because they were terrified of becoming teenagers. They were afraid of problems like drinking, teen suicide and pregnancy. They had all these myths. They thought that when you turned into a teenager, your brain shrunk! It was amazing to us that kids feel so much pressure!

TV does a great job of ~~me~~ making kids feel inadequate and powerless. We think it is important for kids to build self-esteem and feel good about being kids. An important role for us is to be a fun playground where their sense of humor is appreciated.

We are here to accept kids, to help them feel good about themselves. It's a philosophy that impacts everything we do. It impacts casting. We don't look for gorgeous kids, we cast kids of all sizes, kids of all colors and nationalities, every kind of kid. We don't give out the message that "this is what a cool kid should look like or be like." If we want to make kids feel good, we have to embrace them all.

3. Is this how the Nickelodeon philsophy was developed?

Most mission statements would say, "To be the largest provider of kids' entertainment in the world." We didn't do that. (Nickelodeon) had a mission statement which was: "To connect kids with each other and with their world through entertainment." Now, that is a big idea. We would never put anything on Nickelodeon that hadn't been tested with kids.



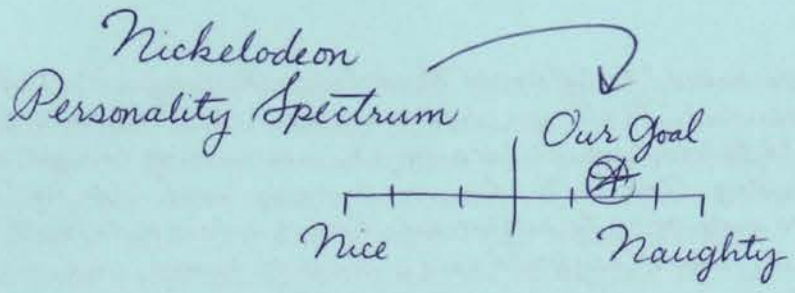
We asked, "What could Nickelodeon be to you?" And they answered, "Well, you could be a place where we could have a childhood," which became the resounding thought of the day. And that's where we came up with "Us vs. Them". We were going to be that safe harbor where kids could be silly, where they could have a sense of humor, and where there were no double-entendre jokes.

Nickelodeon = A place where kids can have a childhood!

4. "Us vs. Them" seems to be a central theme of Nickelodeon's. Exactly what does that mean?

We were never making fun of adults – we were making fun of adults who find fun unbearably loathsome. We were making fun of authority figures such as the father who was completely unfair or the principal who took a kid down to the dungeon and put him in manacles.

We were there to say to kids, "You know what? There are a lot of funny things that will happen in your lives and there are a lot of hard things. And adults will approach these things and they'll be unfair, and that's gonna happen, but you are not in bad shape because look at the kids on this show!"



We believed our duty was to kids. Our goal was to be slightly naughty but not go over that line. My basic belief was that parents would like us if their kids were in better shape after they watched us. I think parents loved us because their kids were happy and funny, and maybe a little sassy; but they weren't doing sword fights and saber rattling after watching Nickelodeon.

5. What were some examples of the way Nickelodeon empowered kids?

Double Dare was the first great show. Every stunt we did was pre-approved by kids and pretested. The whole company got behind it. This wasn't just a side project – this is how we came up with a definitive, completely delicious kind of show. At Nick, kids had veto-power, so if they didn't think something was funny, if they thought it was corny, they would refuse to approve it. It was an interesting process to give kids power. Kids are savvy little media consumers. They know what a story is, so what we tried to do was give them a voice – give kids a chance to shape the kind of media they consumed.

Give kids a voice!

Double Dare
Scoring

Round	Toss up	Normal Question	Dare	Double Dare
1	20	10	20	40
2	40	20	40	80

6. Nick has had great success with programming for preschool kids as well. How were some of your most popular shows developed?

We began this initiative with an extensive process of not only studying the real experts – kids – but also bringing in a panel of experts – everyone from storytellers to playground builders – to find out how TV can help little kids and have an impact on their life experiences.

What we found is that when we were little, young kids usually had parents or primary care givers to help interpret their daily adventures. Now, with 50 percent of ~~xxxx~~ women working outside the home, little kids need help learning how to adapt. Nick Jr. focuses on teaching the three Ps – partnership skills, planning skills and problem-solving skills – in shows that are going to entertain kids ~~xhtt~~ while making learning fun.

— Three Ps —

1. Partnership skills
2. Planning skills
3. Problem-solving skills

Kids have consistently watched about twenty-five hours of television a week for the past twenty years. As long as they're going to watch that much television, we think they should be smart while they're watching it and learn to question and ~~xtat~~ analyze.

7. Animated series have been verry important to Nick's success.

We were confident that animation that was entertaining without being violent, and economically worthwhile without being purely commercial, would be attractive to viewers and critics alike. We went across the country with the theory that there were really good creators out there. We imagined that they had ideas they had tried to sell in their bottom drawers.

Because at that ~~xxx~~ time, if it wasn't based on a toy, it wasn't going to get sold.

You can create great characters that kids want to take to school or sleep with or color in coloring books, but you'd better get the product right first and not design the product for the toy world. It was a very important premise for Nickelodeon – if we let you do your best creative work, we think it will be better for kids.

If we let you do your best
Creative work, we think it
will be better for kids!

Bring notes to mtg.

Lunch @ noon

→ Call tomorrow to change appt.

8. **Nickelodeon** has been one of the top-rated cable networks for almost as long as it **has existed.** What is the most important key to that kind of success?

We take our audience seriously. The commitment of people at Nickelodeon is extraordinary. Everybody wanted to do something great, and it was amazing. And I think good television comes out of committed people. We weren't looking for formulas, and we weren't looking to repeat what others had done. We were looking for something that was fresh, new, and worthy of kids.

Committed People = Good Television!

TRANSCRIBED
4/12/87 BY: JH

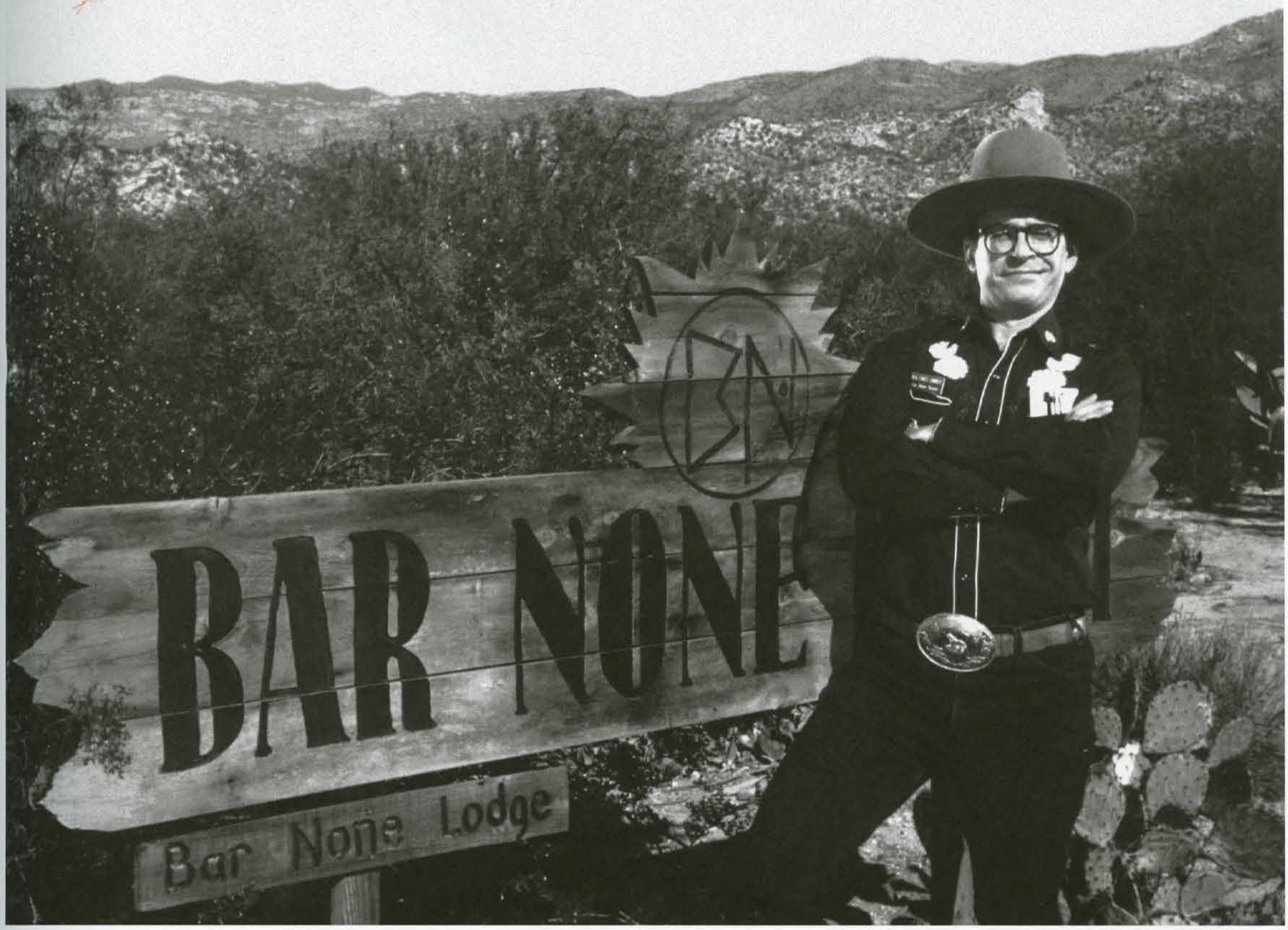
NICK-NACK NO. 005

This popular western sitcom auditioned mostly local talent. One hundred twenty actors from the Tucson area auditioned for the role of ranch owner's son Buddy Ernst before Josh Tygiel was finally chosen.

Nickelodeon began another lasting tradition in this founding era. The network's first teen sitcom property, *Hey Dude,* hit the airwaves in 1989. Young Buddy Ernst (Josh Tygiel) finds himself relocated from New York City to Arizona after his father Ben purchases the Bar None Dude Ranch. Dad just wants to escape his high-pressure job, but Buddy isn't quite happy with the move.

Life, however, goes on. Buddy joins the senior ranch staff (characters Ted McGriff and Danny Lightfoot), where he learns the ways of Western life. Also at the ranch are lifeguard/dance instructor Melody Hanson and riding instructor Bradley "Brad" Taylor, a pretty girl from a wealthy Michigan family. Kyle, a teen cowboy, often joins the other kids. The lone ranch hand is tough but motherly Lucy, whose advice often helps the teens through trying times.

The stories centered on typical teen dilemmas and crises like friendship, work, relationships, and romantic rivalries. Such dilemmas were always addressed in a comic, playful manner, and the show was popular enough with kids to play for 65 episodes over five seasons. *Hey Dude* was a successful template for the landmark teen sitcoms and dramas Nickelodeon would produce in subsequent years.



SALVE

NICKELODEON WAS ABOUT TO BECOME AN ANIMATION STUDIO.

By 1990, Nick's rebranding was nearly complete. Gerry Laybourne had the network turning heads in every corner of the industry, and more importantly, kids were coming to adopt Nick as "their place." Still, in Laybourne's eyes, Nickelodeon wasn't all it could be.

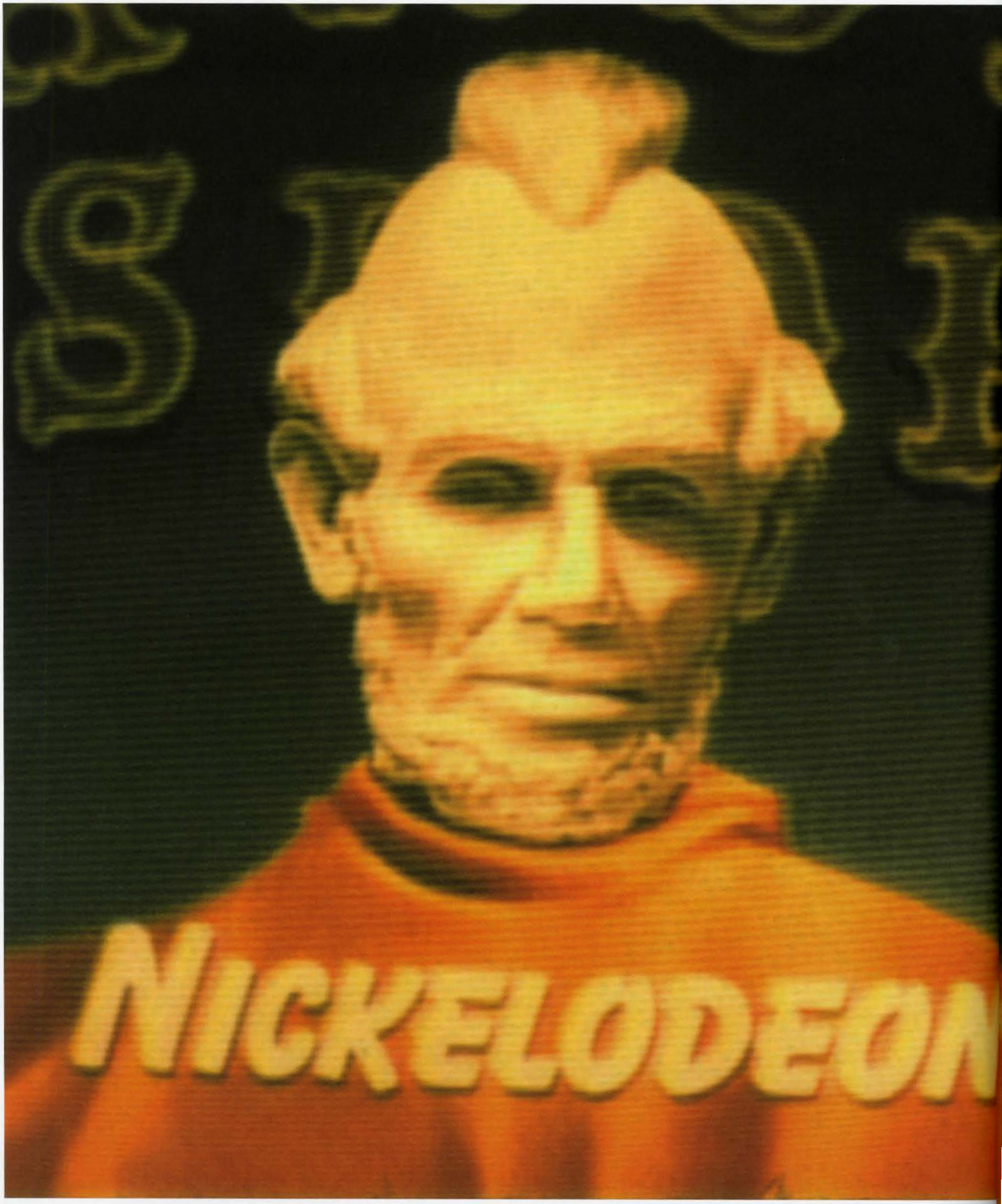
All kids love cartoons. Animated shows, regardless of their quality, consistently draw high ratings on broadcast TV. Nickelodeon did feature animated series, but nearly all of them were foreign imports. Britain's Cosgrove-Hall studio contributed the wry spy series *Danger Mouse* and the horror spoof *Count Duckula*. From Japan came *Adventures of the Little Koala, Noozles, The Littl' Bits,* and the sweet-natured series *Belle and Sebastian. The World of David the Gnome* originated from Spain. Nickelodeon had a world of animation at its disposal, but Laybourne had a bigger vision.

In 1989, she gave two brilliant young women named Mary Harrington and Vanessa Coffey one of the most important assignments in Nickelodeon history: seek out original creators and give them the power to make animated cartoons not based on toys, existing characters, or any sort of licensed properties.

Nickelodeon was about to become an animation studio.

NICK-NACK NO. 601

By 1991, Nick achieved its goal of featuring original animated series driven by its creators' unique and personal visions. *Doug* and *Rugrats* were signature shows. Ren and Stimpy became cartoon icons.


NICKELODEON

THE SECRET SAUCE

ERA

2

PAGES 36–71

NICK-NACK NO. 677

The Nickelodeon brand had one central tenet: Put Kids First! Beyond television, *Nickelodeon Magazine* and promo concert tours put Nick first with kids.

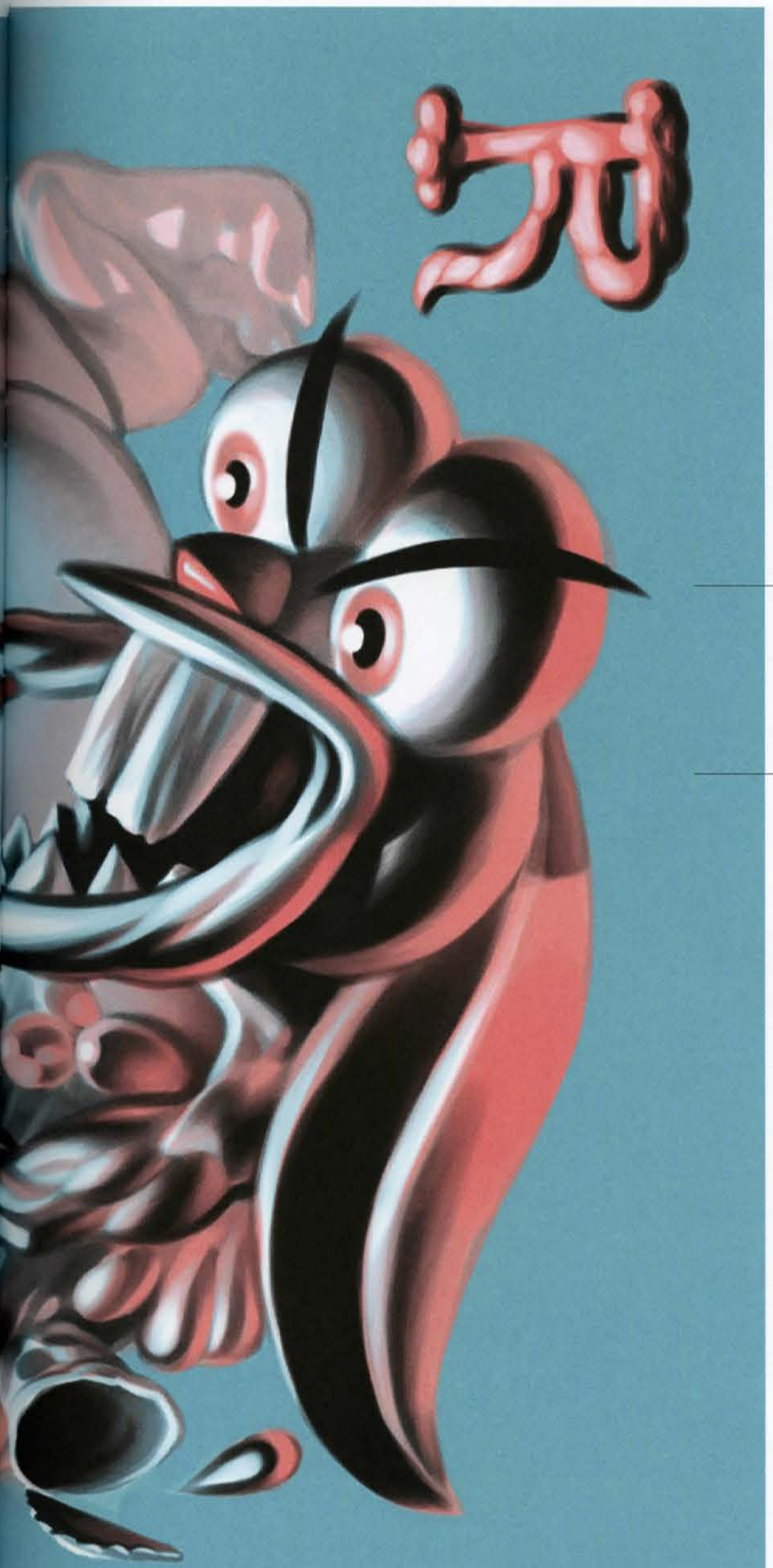
BY THE TIME THE EIGHTIES ENDED, NICKELODEON HAD AN IDENTITY, A FOLLOWING, AND A NEW DECADE AHEAD.

Nick executives wasted no time in taking advantage of their opportunities. They unleashed a slew of new shows that would reshape kids' programming, capturing the ephemeral—the "secret sauce" that makes Nickelodeon unique—and sending it spinning into a till-then uncharted stratosphere.

NICK-NACK NO. 013

In 1990, Nickelodeon Studios opened in Orlando. A working television studio, it was also an attraction at Universal Studios Florida. For the next 14 years, more than 2,000 episodes of Nick shows were filmed here, including live-action series, and game and variety shows.

REN &
STIMPY
52
EPISODES



NICK-NACK NO. 331

Their full names? Renaldo Hoek and Stimpson J. Katt. Pass the Powdered Toast, please!

Kids have spooked each other for generations with scary stories told around a campfire. This led author D.J. McHale to create Nick's first live-action series of the decade, *Are You Afraid of the Dark?* Ten teenagers, led by a boy known only as Gary, constitute "The Midnight Society." Every week the Society's teens gather by firelight in an attempt to terrify each other with tales of the supernatural and horrific. Recalling a *Twilight Zone* for kids, this series ran for five years in two different incarnations. As McHale put it, "We had real kids with real, interesting stories that intersected with whatever the spooky thing might be." While the episodes had a definitely creepy undertone, it was played for humor, too, so the horror was fun without inducing nightmares in young viewers.

Turning its focus to decidedly less supernatural settings, Nick launched a short-lived series that ran for three seasons detailing the goings-on at summer camp Annawanna, "200 miles from the nearest flush toilet." *Salute Your Shorts* made its debut in 1991 and was distinguished by shooting exteriors on location in real Los Angeles area parks (Griffith Park, Franklin Canyon Park) rather than on sets.

LOOGIES, FARTS, AND BAD CHEESE JOKES BECAME PARTS OF A NEW KID CANON.

Director Bryan Spicer remembers how the series fit the Nickelodeon style. "They wanted young, hip directors that were bringing a style," he said. "This show didn't have a format. They just wanted the filmmakers to create something new." The title referred to some unfortunate character's boxers being hoisted to the top of a flagpole. Loogies, farts, and bad cheese jokes became parts of a new kid canon.

Nick knows kids, and school is a big part of every kid's life. Nickelodeon premiered the live-action comedy *Welcome Freshmen* in 1991, set in fictional Hawthorne High School where incompetent vice principal Mr. Lippman attempts (and usually fails) to keep a lively cast of students in line.

Welcome Freshmen was actually a series of comedy skits organized around a theme (such as conformity). Each kid parodied a high school stereotype: The jock, the geek, the mischievous schemer, and the class clown were portrayed by a cast including Rick Galloway, Chris Lobban, and Brock Bradley. Recurring sketches included a faux documentary detailing school gossip, and "Mr. History," who related tales of freshmen past. In its third season, the show converted to a traditional sitcom format.

With its audience firmly in mind, Nick once again kept to its promise that kids came first. In 1991 *Fifteen* was the first—and only—soap opera exclusively for young viewers. The series, created by John Binkley, detailed the lives of students attending Hillside High School. Over the course of 65 episodes, the show convincingly enacted dilemmas of teen life including alcohol abuse, dating, divorce, and the tangles of young love.

CLARISSA
148
EPISODES

Introduced that same year, *Clarissa Explains It All* became a beacon series for Nickelodeon. Running for 65 episodes between 1991–94, *Clarissa* was the first sitcom on TV done entirely from a kid's point of view, with adults clearly relegated to the background. The series made its lead character, Melissa Joan Hart, into a star, and was a major ratings hit for the channel, garnering an Emmy nomination for the show and Young Artist Award nominations for its stars. The series dealt with "tween" year dramas, situations, and dilemmas, and young audience identification was strong. Not every episode was lighthearted, but that only added to the show's honest exploration of tween life. Some serious episodes dealt with issues such as bullying, and others put a funny spin on serious kid topics like parental control, IQ tests, hero worship, and friend conflicts. Although Clarissa's BFF is a boy named Sam Anders, the relationship is platonic and grounded in true friendship. Nickelodeon ensured that Clarissa "kept it real." Clothing designer Lisa Lederer said, "Clarissa was not going to become overtly sexy; we weren't going to go that route. It wouldn't have been true to who she was." The show's narrative was unusual for a tween sitcom: Clarissa Darling did not simply breach the "fourth wall"; she demolished it, narrating her adventures directly to the audience in running commentary. This technique made Clarissa seem more like a friend and confidant to her same-age viewers and was a strong part of the show's appeal.

IT WASN'T THE FIRST SERIES WHERE THE ACTOR COMES OUT OF THE SHOW AND TALKS TO THE CAMERA, BUT IT WAS THE FIRST ONE FOR KIDS.

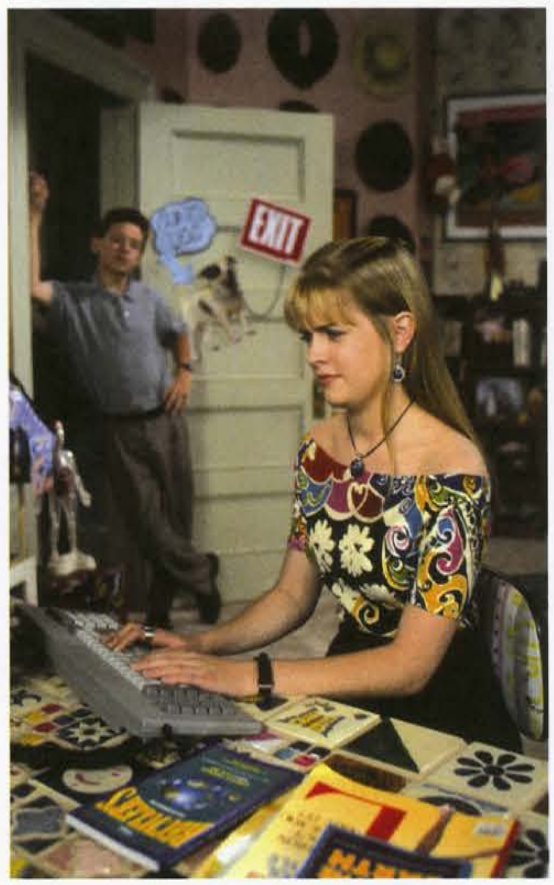
ALAN GOODMAN / CLARISSA EXPLAINS IT ALL

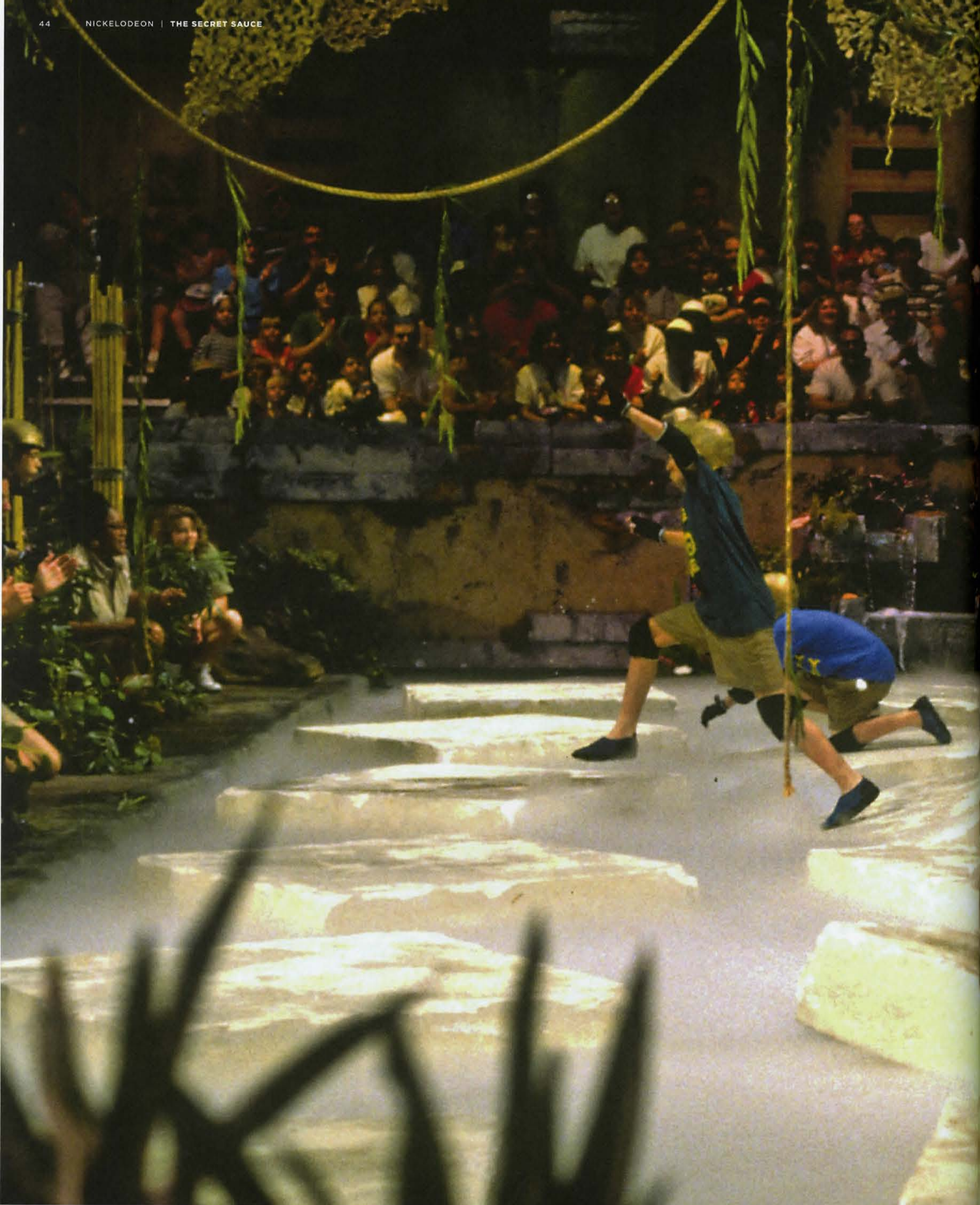
Writer Alan Goodman fondly remembers how the Nick style shone through. "It wasn't the first series where the actor comes out of the show and talks to the camera," he explained, "but it was the first one for kids." Clarissa gave voice to kids' quandaries, and helped put them in perspective in an outspoken way. The hit show left a lasting impression on Nickelodeon's young viewers, a testament to how well Nickelodeon understood their audiences.

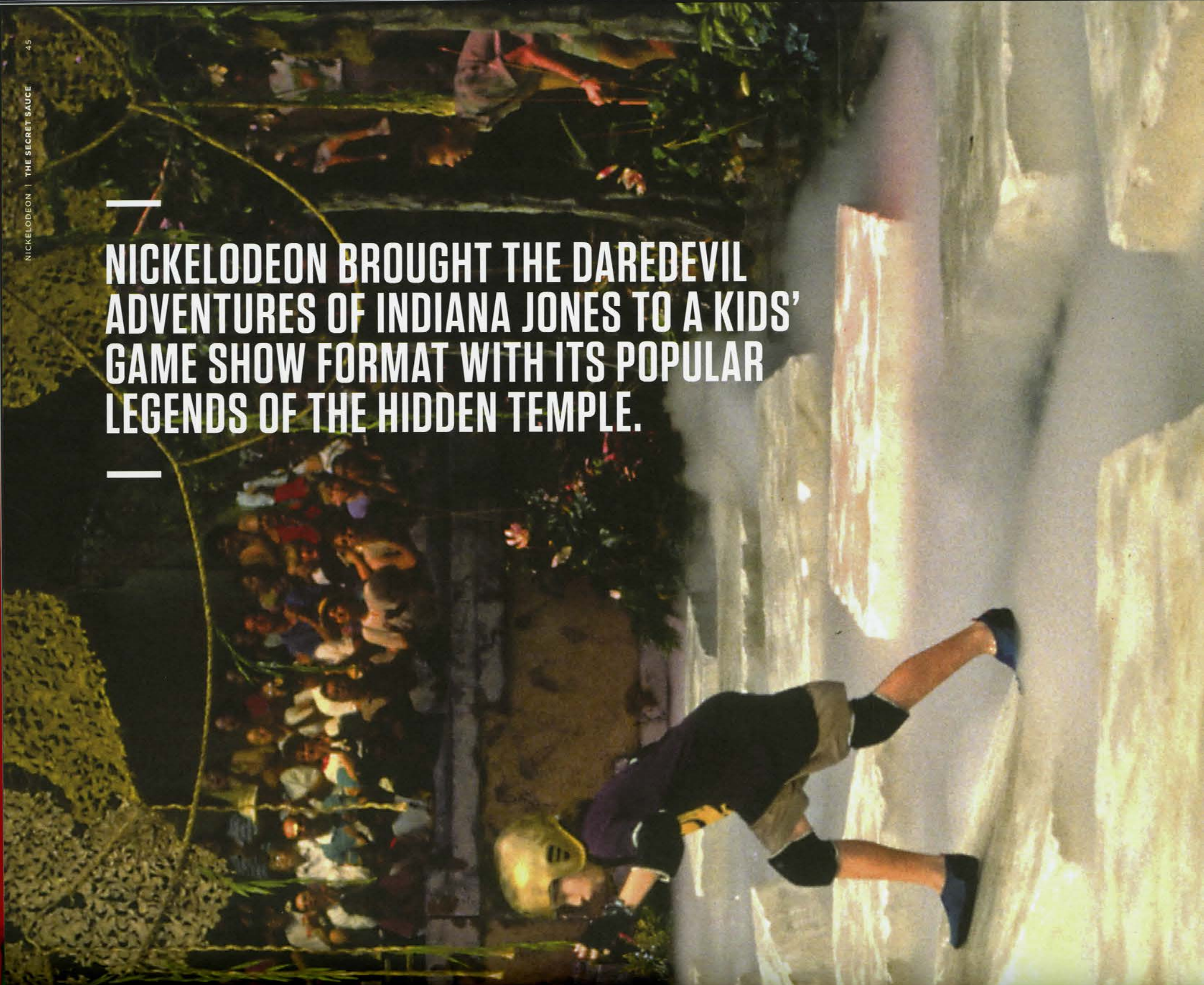
Kids, obstacles, challenges, and a gold medal for the winner. Nickelodeon's affinity for physical sports games began with *Double Dare* and continued with *GUTS*. Three teams of kids competed in sporting events that mirrored real-life sports; kayaking, for example, was called "wave runner." Four competitive events per show led to the big event: the Aggro Crag. As the teams raced up the crag's face activating lighting targets, a "crag troll" ensured that they had to return and activate any that they missed. As if that wasn't hard enough, the contestants faced tinsel "snow storms", faux boulder "avalanches" and wild strobe lights.

NICK-NACK NO. 431

Clarissa Darling was every kid's idea of a typical teen, and a best friend, popular with both male and female viewers.







NICKELODEON BROUGHT THE DAREDEVIL ADVENTURES OF INDIANA JONES TO A KIDS' GAME SHOW FORMAT WITH ITS POPULAR LEGENDS OF THE HIDDEN TEMPLE.

PETE & PETE WAS ALL ABOUT THE MELANCHOLY AND EMOTIONALITY OF CHILDHOOD AS MUCH AS IT WAS ABSURDIST; IT WAS MORE ABOUT THE STRANGE THINGS THAT HAPPEN IN CHILDHOOD AND HOW TRUTHFUL THEY ARE.

KATHERINE DIECKMANN / DIRECTOR / PETE & PETE

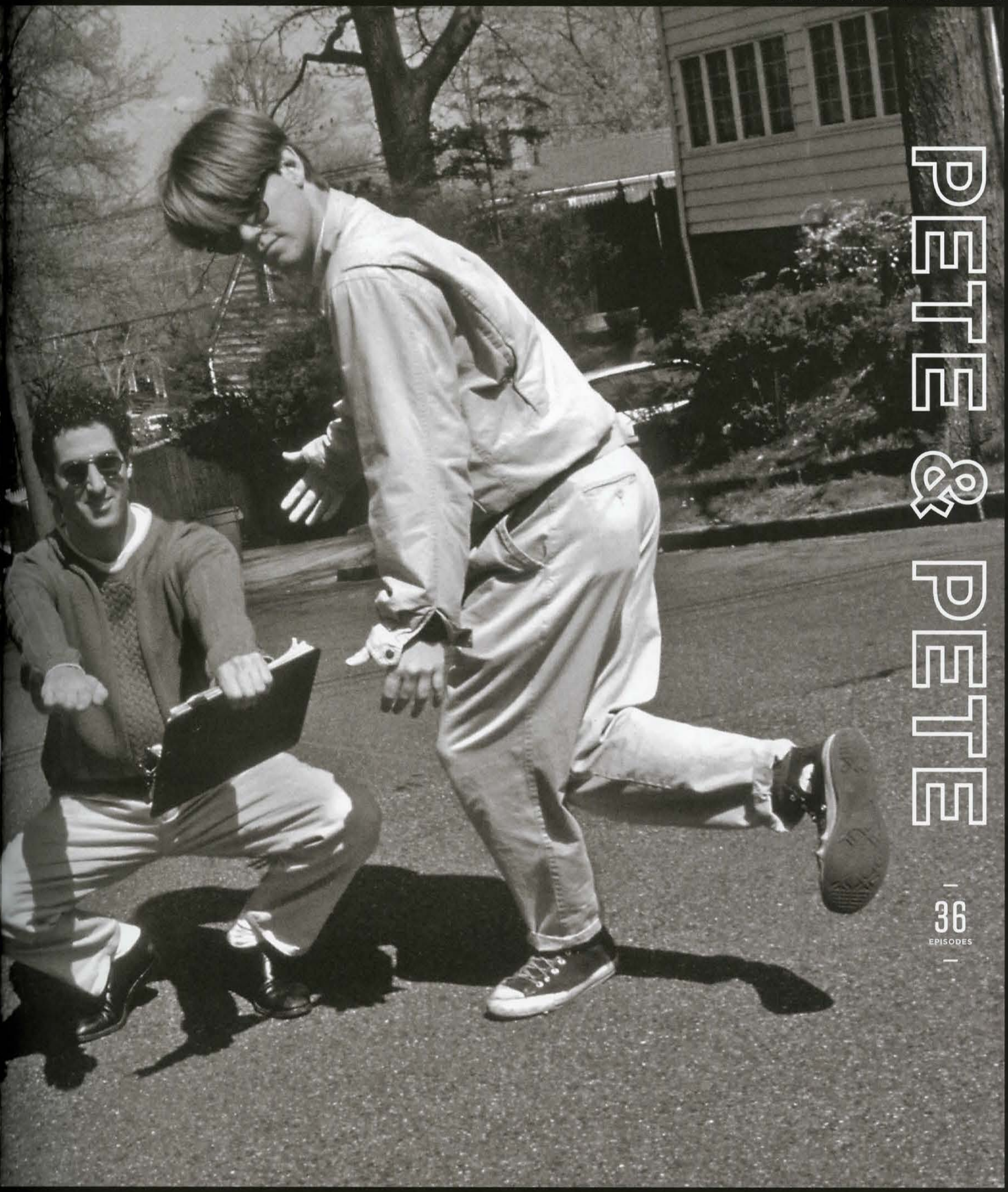
The tradition of game and variety shows continued with *Legends of the Hidden Temple* in 1993, a show that crossed Indiana Jones with Trivial Pursuit. Six boy/girl kid teams compete to collect ancient artifacts by performing stunts and answering questions. A talking Olmec head (voiced by Dee Bradley Baker, who went on to bring life to dozens of animated characters from Daffy Duck to Perry the Platypus) guides contestants along. The show won a CableACE Award in 1995.

1993 also brought one of the strangest and most popular (and best written) live-action shows the studio would ever produce. *The Adventures of Pete & Pete* could best be described as a 1950s family sitcom put through a blender and launched into the fourth dimension. Two brothers named Pete Wrigley, a.k.a., Big Pete (the smart one) and Little Pete (the impetuous one), were inhabitants of Wellsville, USA.

Cocreators Will McRobb and Chris Viscardi had produced a series of minute-long interstitials for Nick in 1989 featuring the Pete brothers. After five half-hour specials, the team got the go-ahead for a series, to launch in the fall of 1993. Director Katherine Dieckmann explained how the series fit Nickelodeon's image. "*Pete & Pete* was all about the melancholy and emotionality of childhood as much as it was absurdist," she said. "It was more about the strange things that happen in childhood and how truthful they are." McRobb adds: "What was great about *Pete & Pete* is we glorified being a kid."

NICK-NACK NO. 101

The Adventures of Pete & Pete was Nickelodeon's take on how weird a kid's life could be.



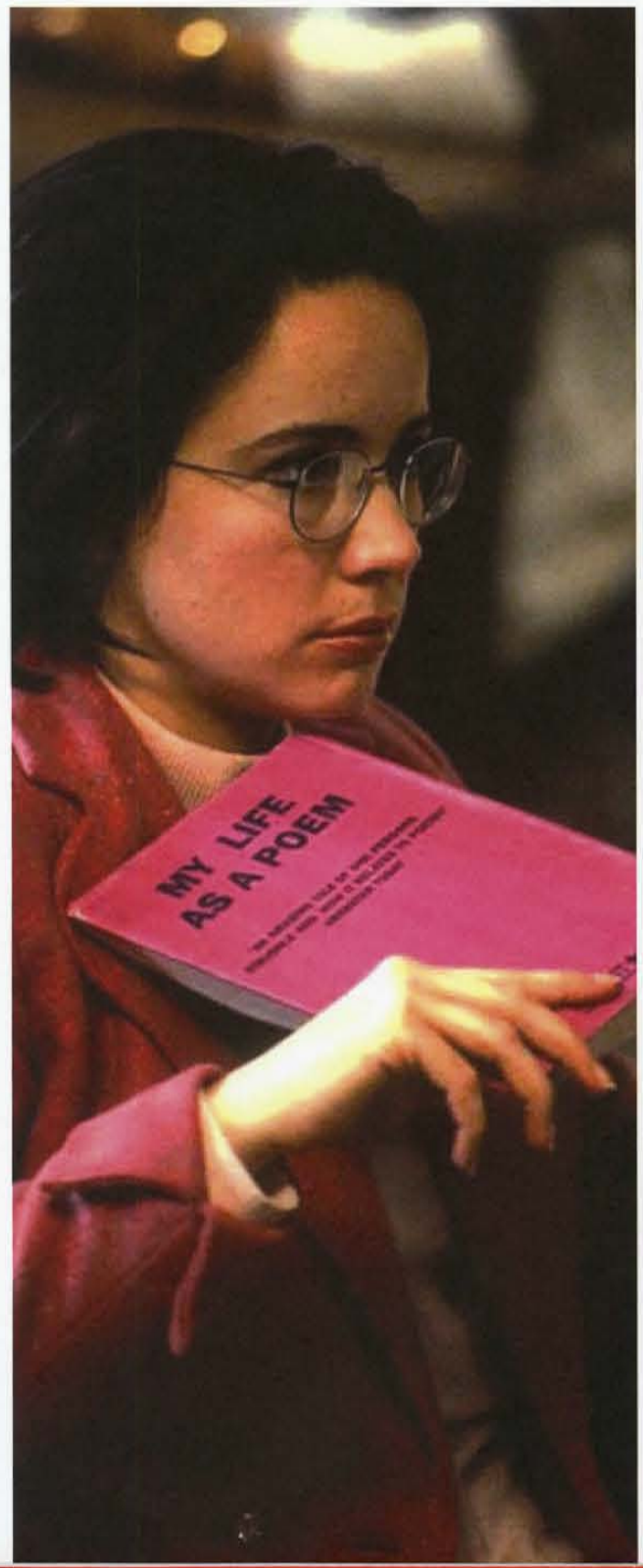
PETE & PETE

36
EPISODES

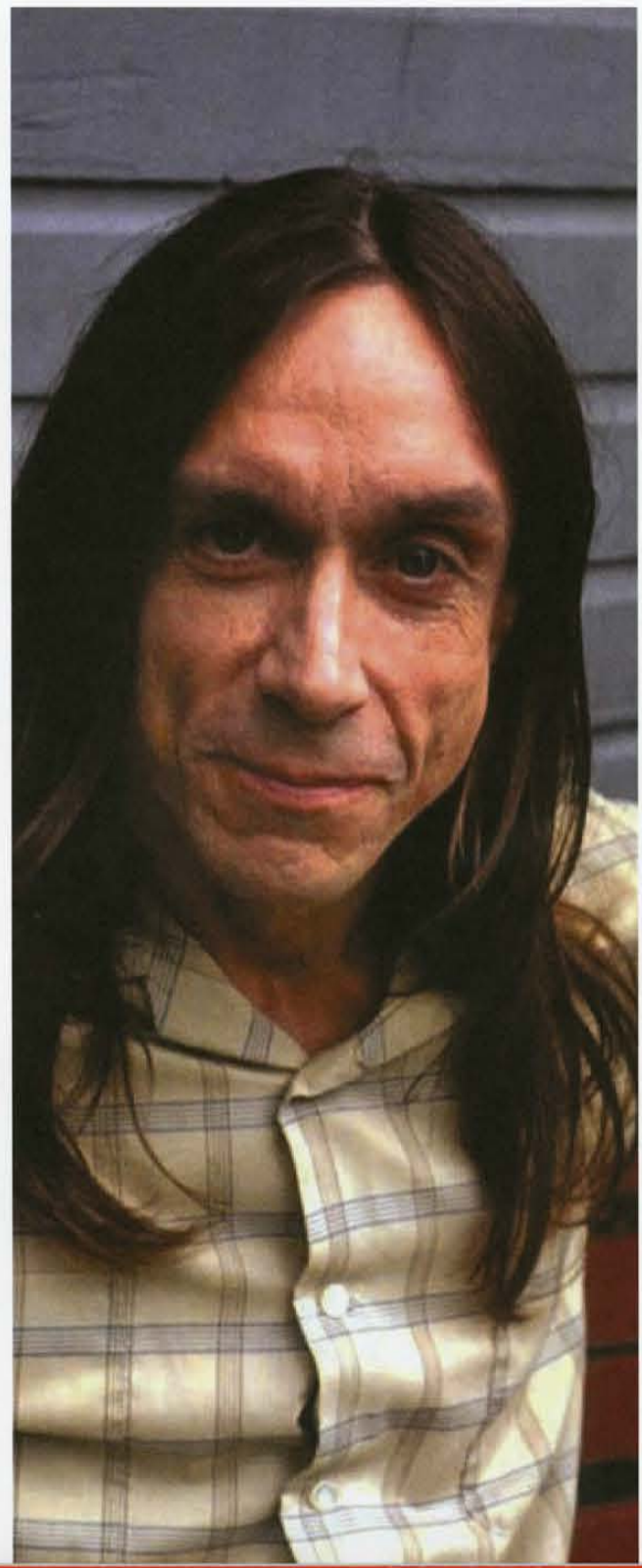
NICK-NACK NO. 787

Was it the comedy? The loony, surreal stories? Celebrities found the lure of *The Adventures of Pete & Pete* irresistible.

JANEANE GAROFALO



IGGY POP

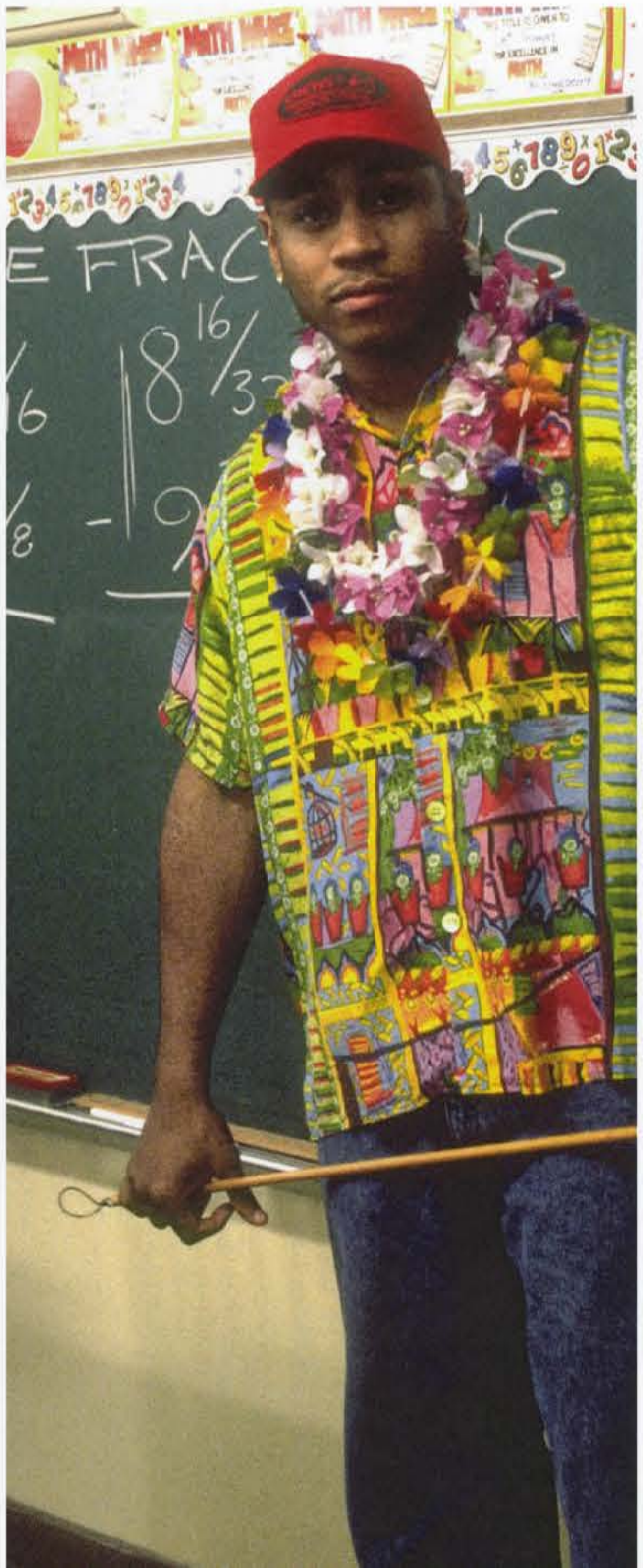


DAVID JOHANSEN

Among other things, the series' 36 episodes featured Big Pete's OCD best friend Ellen, and Little Pete's bizarre superhero friend, Artie, the Strongest Man in the World. Little Pete has a woman named Petunia tattooed on his forearm. Mom has a metal plate in her head that brings in radio signals, and the boys face off against nefarious kids such as Hat Head, Open Face, and Pit Stain. Add in guest stars as diverse (and inspired) as Steve Buscemi, Iggy Pop, LL Cool J, Janeane Garofalo, Debbie Harry, Adam West, and Patty Hearst and things went from real to surreal in no time.

STEVE BUSCEMI

LL COOL J



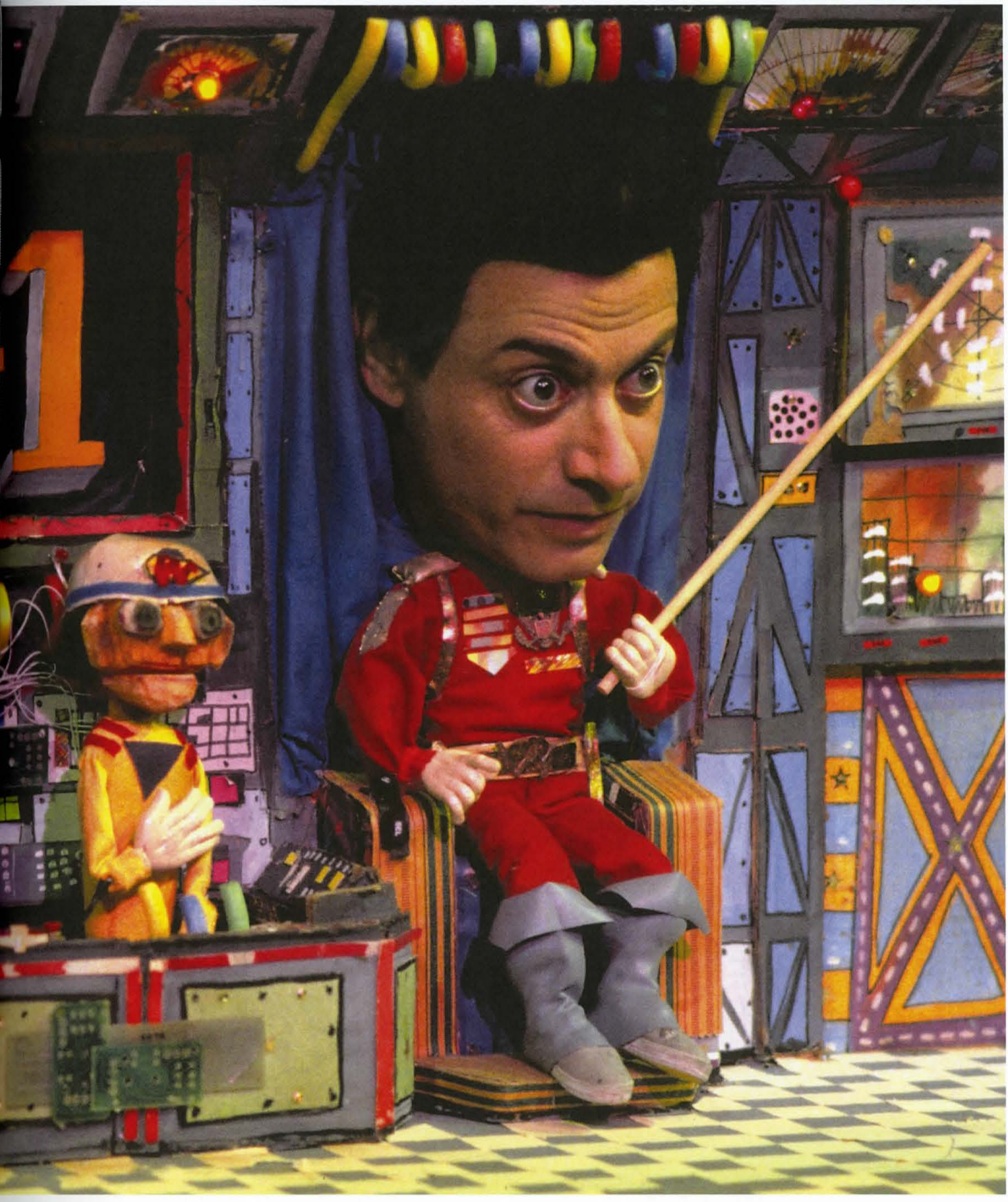
MICHAEL STIPE

Weinerville was no less weird, just a different kind of weird. The ringmaster for this thoroughly eccentric 1993 audience participation show was Marc Weiner and his array of nutty puppets, most of which wore Weiner's real head on their puppet-sized bodies. Marc Weiner generously helped Dottie (the befuddled mayor of Weinerville) with her problems, at the same time hosting the series' featured game shows and airing classic cartoon shorts. Contestants on "That's Not Fair!" and "Playland" could become "Weinerized" and turned into miniature puppets, which is a bit of oddball heaven for a kid. The series ran for 62 episodes.

Nick is also famous for imaginative contests and lavish prizes. One of the first, *Super Toy Grab*, dates back to 1993. Winning kids, dressed in racing jumpsuits, get five minutes to go wild in a Toys"R"Us store. *Nick Takes Over Your School* is a perennial favorite; the winning postcard means that Nick stars, dancers, whipped cream slides, and other messy obstacle courses descend upon the winner's school. Of course, the teachers and principal are slimed!

NICK-NACK NO. 089

In addition to the *Weinerville* show, Marc Weiner and his madcap puppet ensemble also hosted Nick's annual New Year's Eve celebration.



ALL THAT

148
EPISODES

NICK-NACK NO.
563

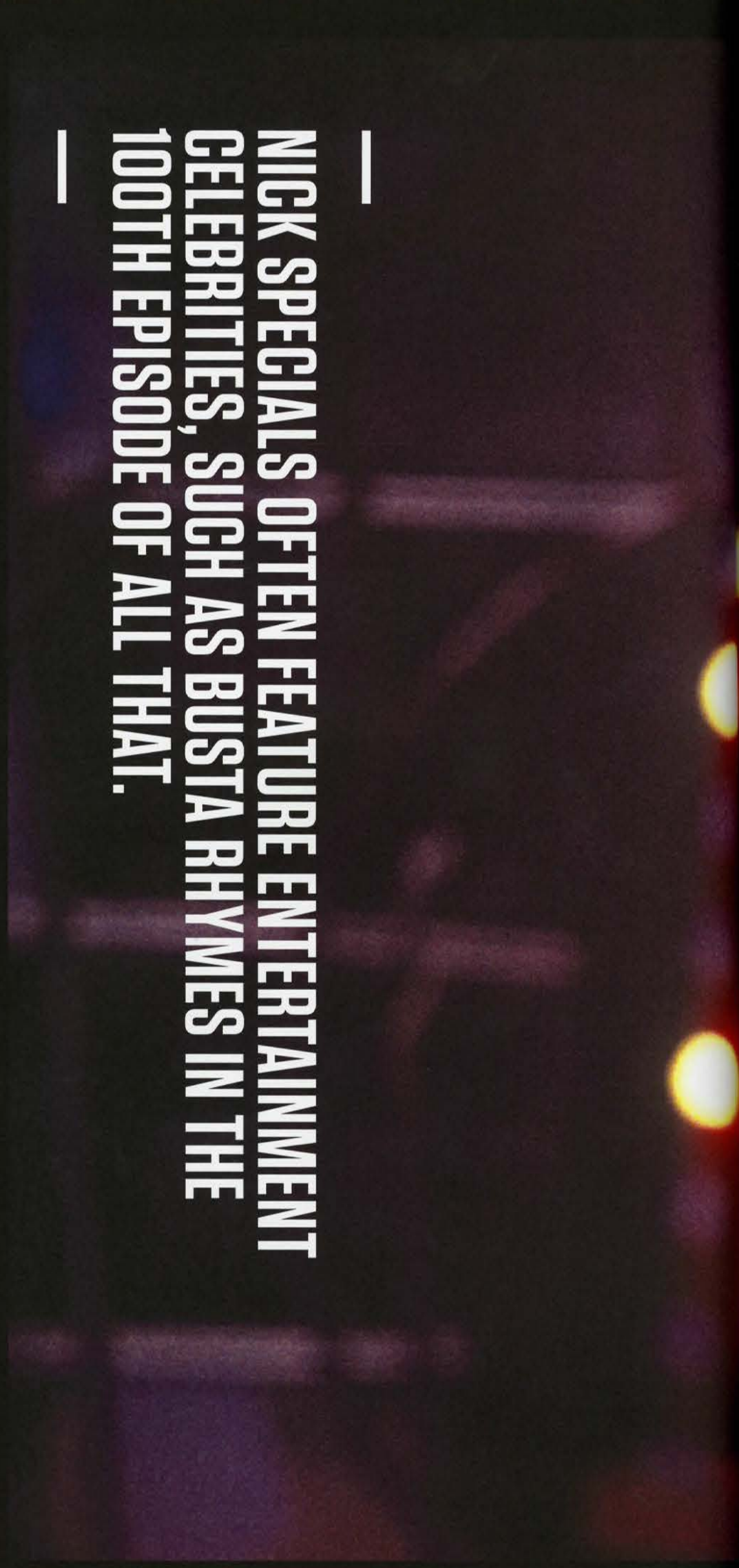
One of Nick's longest running shows was introduced in 1994. *All That* would run for 10 years and 148 episodes, produce scads of hilarious skits, and launch the careers of several stars including film actress Amanda Bynes and *Saturday Night Live* player Kenan Thompson. In many ways this series was great training for Thompson, as it was a kid's version of the one he eventually joined. His and Kel Mitchell's recurring fast food sketch, "Good Burger," was expanded into a feature film in 1997, and the comedy duo eventually made four seasons of the Nick show *Kenan & Kel,* which produced 62 episodes and ran until 2000.

If you were accidentally drenched with top-secret chemical GC-161 you might be able to levitate, turn yourself into liquid, or become telekinetic. This happened to Alexandra (Alex) Mack, the teenage star of Nick's last live-action entry of the mid 1990s. In *The Secret World of Alex Mack,* Larisa Oleynik portrays the super teen who does not always have control over her powers and struggles to avoid discovery. Hot on her trail is the evil Danielle Atron, the CEO of Paradise Valley Chemical plant where GC-161 was developed. Created by Thomas Lynch and Ken Lipman, the show was, of course, enormously successful and highly regarded by its teen fans. Score another hit for Nickelodeon.

NICK-NACK NO. 241

Three hundred girls auditioned for the role of Alex before 12-year-old Larisa Oleynik was chosen. Actress Jessica Alba also made her TV debut as Alex' nemesis Jessica. Not only was Alex a TV star, she was the hero of 34 books.

All That was Nick's greatest comedy revue, with brilliant sketches performed by and for kids. Besides launching the later careers of several movie and TV stars, the show went on national tour in 2000. It won eight Kids' Choice Awards in 10 years and also spawned an amazing 11 spin-off series for its stars.



NICK SPECIALS OFTEN FEATURE ENTERTAINMENT CELEBRITIES, SUCH AS BUSTA RHYMES IN THE 100TH EPISODE OF ALL THAT.

NICK-NACK NO. 059

Everyone from Busta Rhymes to LL Cool J appeared on Nick shows. Rocker Pink performed in the special "lost episode" of *SpongeBob SquarePants*.

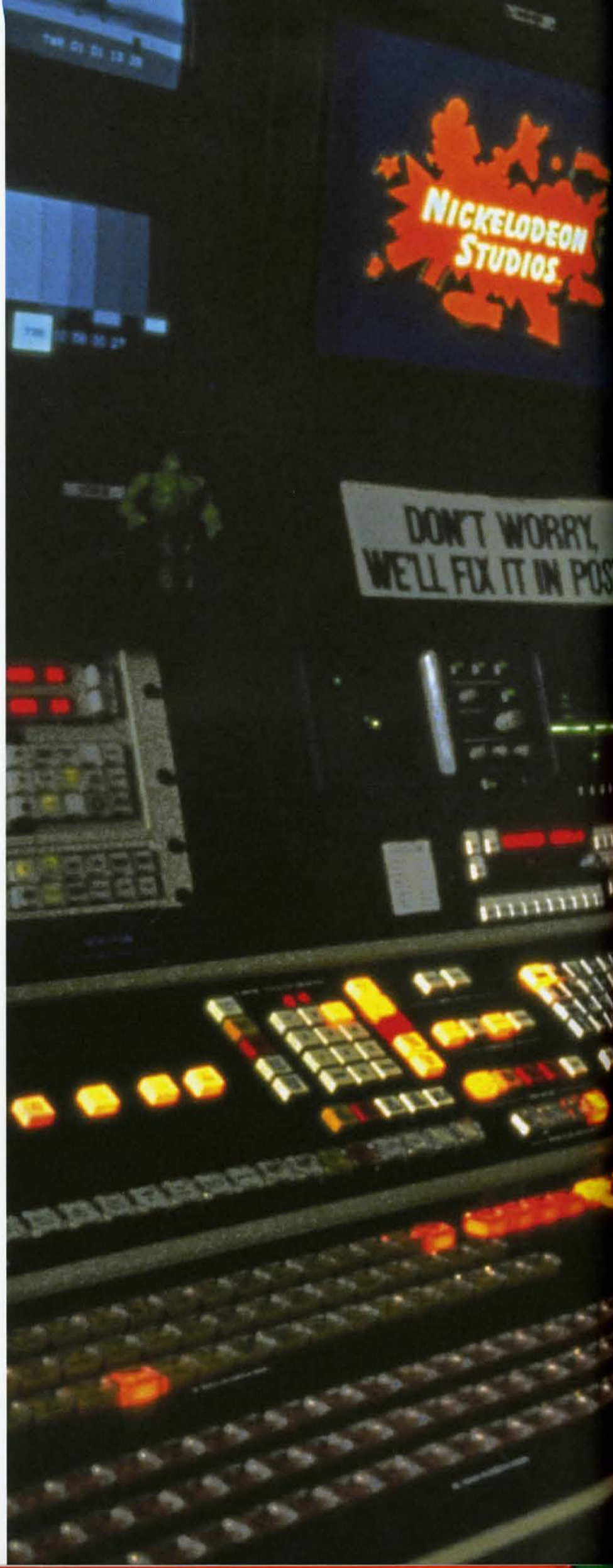
Nickelodeon had the most intriguing lineup of live-action shows for kids among all cable entities, but the network knew it could extend its audience reach even more. Before 1989, animated shows on Nick consisted of airing classic cartoons (such as Warner Bros.' Looney Tunes) or on series that originated overseas. As the 1990s dawned, the heads of programming and scheduling held a crucial meeting in New Jersey, where president Gerry Laybourne made a decision to produce four original, creator-driven cartoon series. Nick's new animation producer Vanessa Coffey teamed with animation executive Mary Harrington on the project, and the call went out for any and all creative individuals to pitch their animated projects.

Eight series were considered at first; five either did not test well in focus groups of kids or were met with reservations by the Nick animation brain trust. Joey Ahlbaum, creator of a bumper featuring singing dinosaurs, teamed with Mark Catapano to expand the idea into a pilot starring a dinosaur band called "Thunder Lizards." Another Nick bumper, designed by George Evelyn, had five happy critters in T-shirts that spelled out "Nickelodeon." Evelyn pitched "Big Beast Quintet," in which they became reporters working for an unpredictable boss. "Weasel Patrol," based on a comic book by Ken Macklin and Lela Dowling, told the adventures of seven inept crime fighting weasels. Having had success with two British imports (*Danger Mouse* and *Count Duckula*), Vanessa Coffey and Mary Harrington considered two pilots produced by Britain's Cosgrove-Hall studios. Mark Hall and Brian Cosgrove offered "The Crowville Chronicles," starring journalist Clarence T. Crow and koala photographer Ozzie, and "Trash," the adventures of a superhero living on a planet composed of garbage.

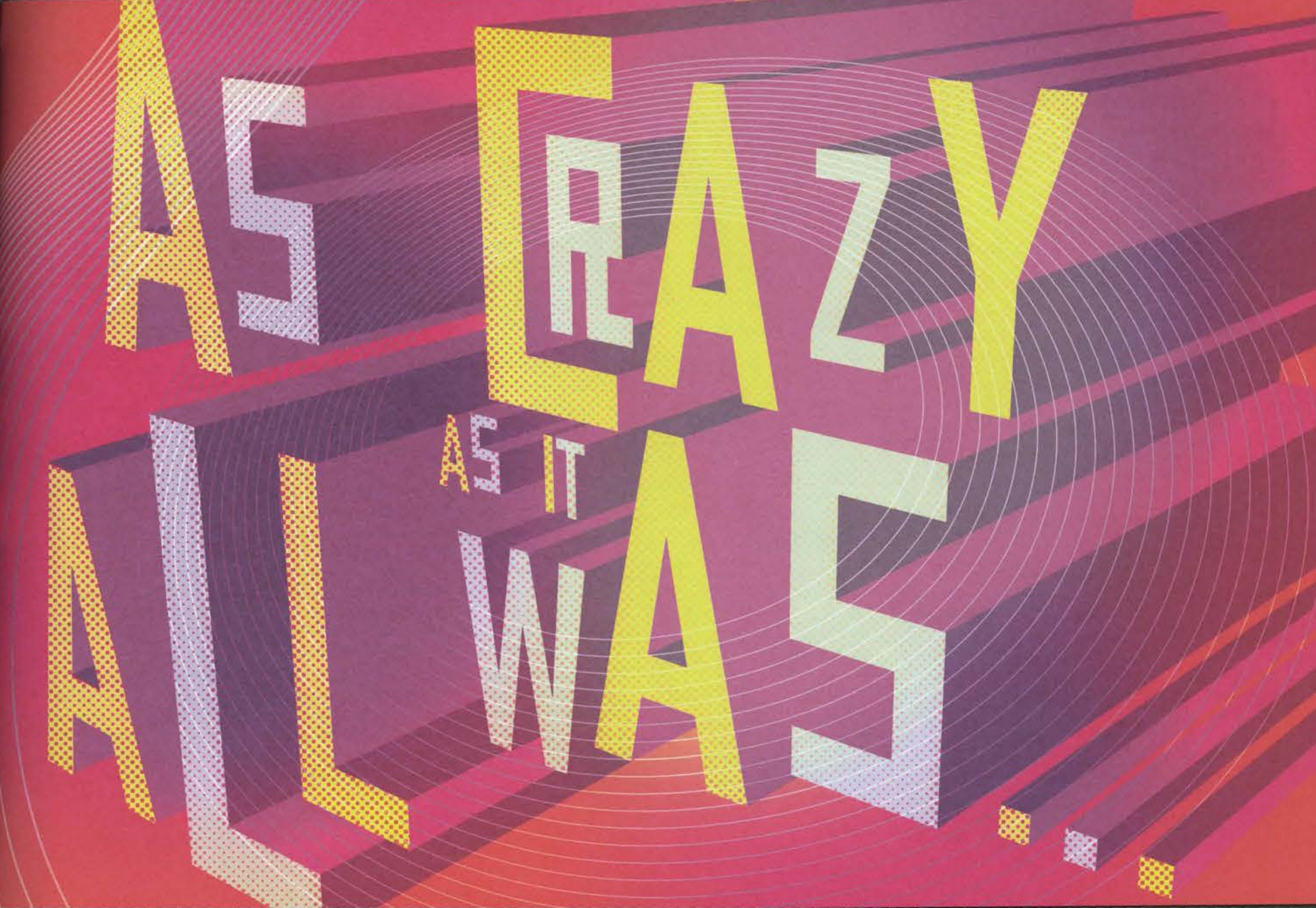
Of the eight series considered, the other three blossomed into exceptional series that won acclaim and millions of fans.

NICK-NACK NO. 223

Kids rocked the 1990s in Nick's many live-action series. From *Hey Dude* to *All That*, kid stars—and viewers—ruled TV.



NICKELODEON HAD THE MOST INTRIGUING LINEUP OF LIVE-ACTION SHOWS FOR KIDS AMONG ALL CABLE ENTITIES, BUT THE NETWORK KNEW IT COULD EXTEND ITS AUDIENCE REACH EVEN MORE.


AS CRAZY
AS IT
ALL WAS...

IT SOUNDS LIKE YOU HAD A SITUATION UNIQUE TO CREATING CARTOON SHOWS.

I was a kid in a candy store. I didn't show storyboards to anyone until they were right. No one was reading scripts—at least not until after the first pilots were made and I brought Mary Harrington in. I had made three pilots—there were several others produced by other producers at Nick—but it was my three that went to series.

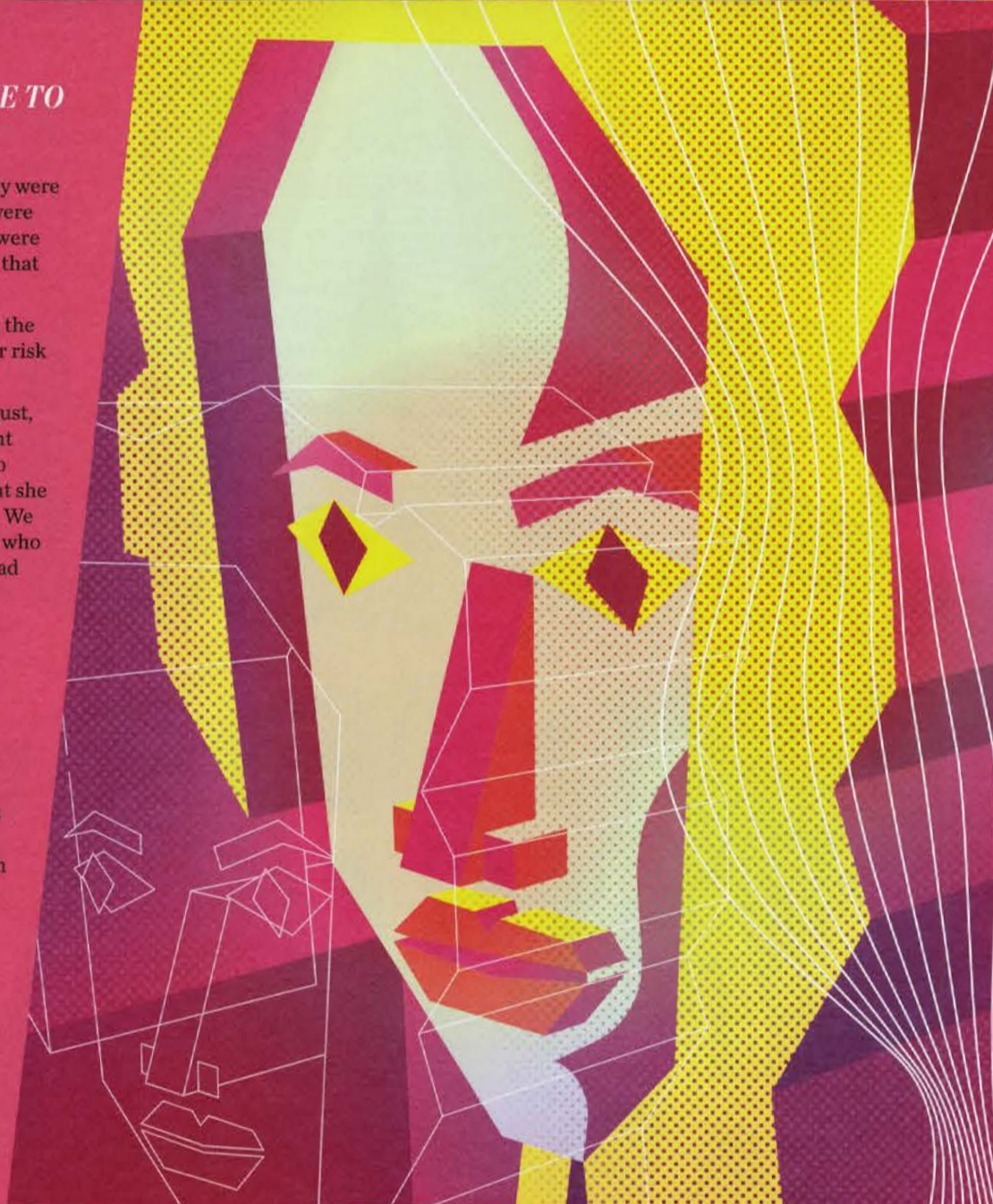
Gerry took the pilots and went to bat with Viacom and the big boys to get the financial commitment to turn them into series. It was a $13 million dollar risk at the time. But it worked!

Before I knew it, we had a deadline. Gerry really wanted to launch in August, on a Sunday—a time and place when kids had no other new entertainment options. I soon hired Mary because she was great at producing and was so creative. Linda Simensky was working in another department at Nick, but she had such a strong interest in animation, I brought her in to work with us. We had an overwhelming task of producing three shows, with three creators who hadn't done long-form. Klasky Csupo, when we first approached them, had only done commercials and *The Simpsons* shorts.

NICKTOONS CHANGED THE FACE OF TV ANIMATION. HOW DID YOU PERCEIVE THE CHANGES YOU WERE MAKING?

I thought of those initial three Nicktoons as a three-course meal—each one would feel different, taste different, like a meal. We had one that was good for kids (which was *Doug*), one that was a wild dish of spaghetti (that was *Rugrats)* and of course, dessert (*The Ren & Stimpy Show*), which was fun and it tasted good. Another thing we did differently was initiate 11-minute segments. They had asked me how I wanted to design the 90-minute Nicktoon block and I was tired of the half-hour "sitcoms" most TV cartoons had become. I felt they were padded with "filler." I thought that to break up the half hour with two 11-minute episodes made sense. You could tell a story in 11 minutes. All the cartoons have been 11 minutes ever since.

As crazy as it all was, it was one of the most creatively free and professionally amazing experiences I've ever had.



HOW DID YOU COME TO NICKELODEON—AND WHAT WAS IT LIKE TO BE THERE AT THE BEGINNING OF NICKTOONS?

I had worked in animation development at Marvel Productions—and later joined Murakami Wolf Swenson to bring *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* to series. I left L.A. and moved to New York to try something new. The only "kids" producer in Manhattan was Nickelodeon. I cold-called Debby Beece there and was told they had an animated Thanksgiving special and were considering doing more animation. I wrote up a business plan for them, highlighting what the benefits of doing animated series would be. I became a consultant and had numerous brainstorming meetings with them. We considered all sorts of ideas in then—including buying old characters or maybe creating toys first ... but we ultimately went with the idea of being original. Doing new things.

HOW WERE THOSE FIRST NICKTOONS CHOSEN?

At first, Nickelodeon employed me as a consultant and I began seeking new ideas for the channel. I didn't really take pitches. I sought out artists. Most of the people I spoke to didn't have a formal series in mind when we started talking. I recall *Doug* had come to me as a clever little book called *My New Shoes*. Since Nick had done a Thanksgiving special, I had an idea for another one—Thanksgiving from a baby's point of view. Klasky Csupo pitched me several ideas that weren't right, but they had a rough idea to do a show from a baby's point of view and I asked them to pursue that. They had no characters yet, but I asked them to not design them like "real" babies. They took it from there. Having worked for Marvel for years, I was particularly adverse to realistic character designs. I wanted cartoons.

That led me to John Kricfalusi and his pitch, "Your Gang." Ren and Stimpy were pets of the gang—and I asked John if we could just pull them out and make a show based on them. I had so much freedom there. Whenever something looked good, I'd run down the hall to Gerry Laybourne, Debby Beece, or Geoffrey Darby and—for me, this the greatest thing about that era—they would simply say, "You're the expert on this. Do what you want to do." And that's when we started making the pilots.

MARY
HAIRING

YOU WERE PART OF NICKTOONS FROM THE VERY BEGINNING. WHAT WAS THE ORIGINAL MANDATE FOR ANIMATION FROM NICKELODEON?

It was groundbreaking and exciting because at the time, animation was filled with toy driven projects. Here was this upstart company wanting to do original, creator-driven animation.

I had first noticed Nickelodeon not because of its programming but because of its promos. Nick had a lot of attitude. Very humorous, pushing the envelope, taking risks. That's what we wanted in our animation programming.

We were defining what we were looking for. First, we wanted creators who had a vision and great characters who kids could relate to. We were looking for comedy. We were looking for different looks—the first three shows we launched (*Doug*, *Rugrats* and *The Ren & Stimpy Show*) had completely different art styles. They were unlike anything else out there.

I feel like I was part of animation history and the animation renaissance. Hanna-Barbera and Warner Bros. had a studio style. We didn't have a studio style. We used independent studios with strong points of view.

HOW DID THE NICKTOONS STUDIO COME TO BE?

A few years after the original Nicktoons launched, we were ready to start *Rocko's Modern Life*, but there was no studio behind it—just the creator (Joe Murray). The network had this "let's just do it" attitude and we thought "let's just produce the show ourselves." Vanessa Coffey and I knew how to do that. We went out to L.A. (from New York) to look for office space. At first, our little studio was called "Games Animation." The reason it was called that was because their was a payroll account set up for the game shows that Nickelodeon did—and we could pay people through the "Games" account. We were not happy with the name of the studio then.

We set up to do *Rocko* with about 40 artists. There was a lot of talent on that crew: Joe Murray, Stephen Hillenberg, Doug Lawrence, Dan Povenmire and Jeff "Swampy" Marsh, Robert Scull, Conrad Vernon, Tom Kenny's first job as a voice .... I was running the studio and still doing development of new series. We wore many different hats back in those days.

HOW MUCH CREATIVE LATITUDE DID YOU HAVE TO DEVELOP SHOWS IN THE EARLY DAYS?

We had a lot of latitude. I recall when we were doing *Hey Arnold!*, realizing we were supervising both the studio and granting network approval at the same time. We were just making it and putting it on the air. As for the latitude, *Ren & Stimpy* was a huge hit—and it informed us as to how far we could or could not go. That show was not only popular with the audience, but it proved to the animation community that we were creator-driven. It attracted much talent to the studio.

HOW IMPORTANT DO YOU THINK ANIMATION IS TO NICKELODEON?

Well, I'm a little biased, but I think animation has been most important to Nickelodeon. Its biggest successes have been through animation. The early Nicktoons got ratings they'd never seen. The animation series travel internationally and translate easier. Nicktoons built the consumer products division. Animation put Nickelodeon on the map—and it was the first time a cable channel could compete with the big three (or four) networks, and in kids' programming, it beat them.

WAS THERE A "SECRET SAUCE" FOR THE SUCCESS?

Nick spoke directly to kids. I remember when we started Nicktoons, the attitude at Nickelodeon was sweetly subversive and a little bit naughty. It was like, "Kids, this is just for you. Make sure your parents are in the other room." So kids really connected with it.

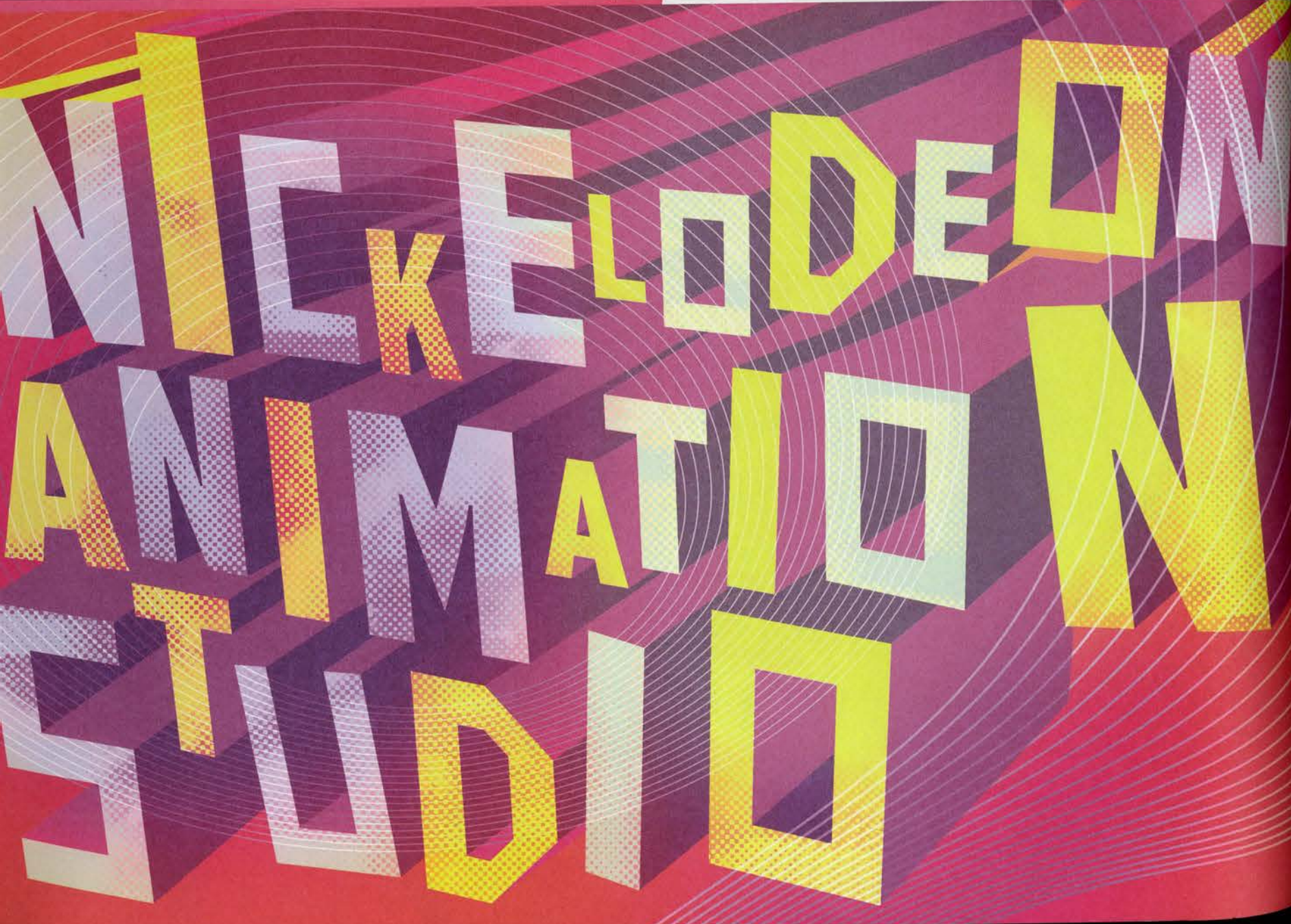
I also think the characters all felt real—characters that kids all felt they could be friends with. I recall at one of our research sessions, they loved the craziness of *Ren & Stimpy* and the adventures of the babies on *Rugrats* and how they never get caught. We asked about *Doug*, and the reaction was, "What do you mean? *Doug* is about real life." They really believed in him. We also tackled topics and weren't afraid to try things—like when we did an episode of *Rugrats* that addresses the fact that Chucky doesn't have a mother.

WHERE ARE NICKTOONS TODAY?

Sometimes, as companies grow, they lose that fresh young risk-taking environment. When you are small there is nowhere to go but up, but once you're up, it becomes more difficult. I'm happy to say we are still on track today with shows like *Sanjay and Craig*, *Breadwinners*, *Harvey Beaks*, and *Pig Goat Banana Cricket*. It's feeling like the Nick I once knew is back again.

"I'M A LITTLE BIASED, BUT I THINK ANIMATION HAS BEEN MOST IMPORTANT TO NICKELODEON."

MARY HARRINGTON


NICKELODEON
ANIMATION
STUDIO

NICK LIKED THAT REB WERE DRAWN TO THE REBELLING AGAINST

Canadian animator John Kricfalusi was a cartoon fanatic with fantastic energy and a love of classic shorts. A self-proclaimed acolyte of famed Warner Bros. director Bob Clampett, John K. (as he came to be known) had an uncanny knack for translating the bizarre, manic style of 1940s cartoons into modern form. After he found no takers for his proposal "Your Gang" among the broadcast networks, he pitched the series to Nick. None of the kids in the gang made an impression on Coffey, but she loved the show's two "pets," a high strung Chihuahua and an obese, dim-witted cat. Their names? Ren and Stimpy. Linda Simensky, Nick's animation manager, admired the spirit of John K's cartoons since they dovetailed with the network's own ambitions for original kids' programming. "Nick liked that rebel quality, and they were drawn to the fact that John was rebelling against the industry," she said. "*Ren and Stimpy* was far enough from the mainstream that they'd be able to work with him. It was ours! We liked it! We enjoyed the notoriety. It put Nick animation on the map."

The map would be marked with farts, signposted with "magic nose goblins," and paved with dirty kitty litter. *The Ren and Stimpy Show* shattered every convention in animated programming, eventually becoming the template for breaking the boundaries of American animation. In John Kricfalusi, Nickelodeon found a living compendium of animation history. He infused his cartoons with a touch of Bob Clampett and Tex Avery in their heydays, stirred in a dollop of early Hanna-Barbera TV cartoons, and added a hefty helping of goofy grossness that no kid could possibly resist.

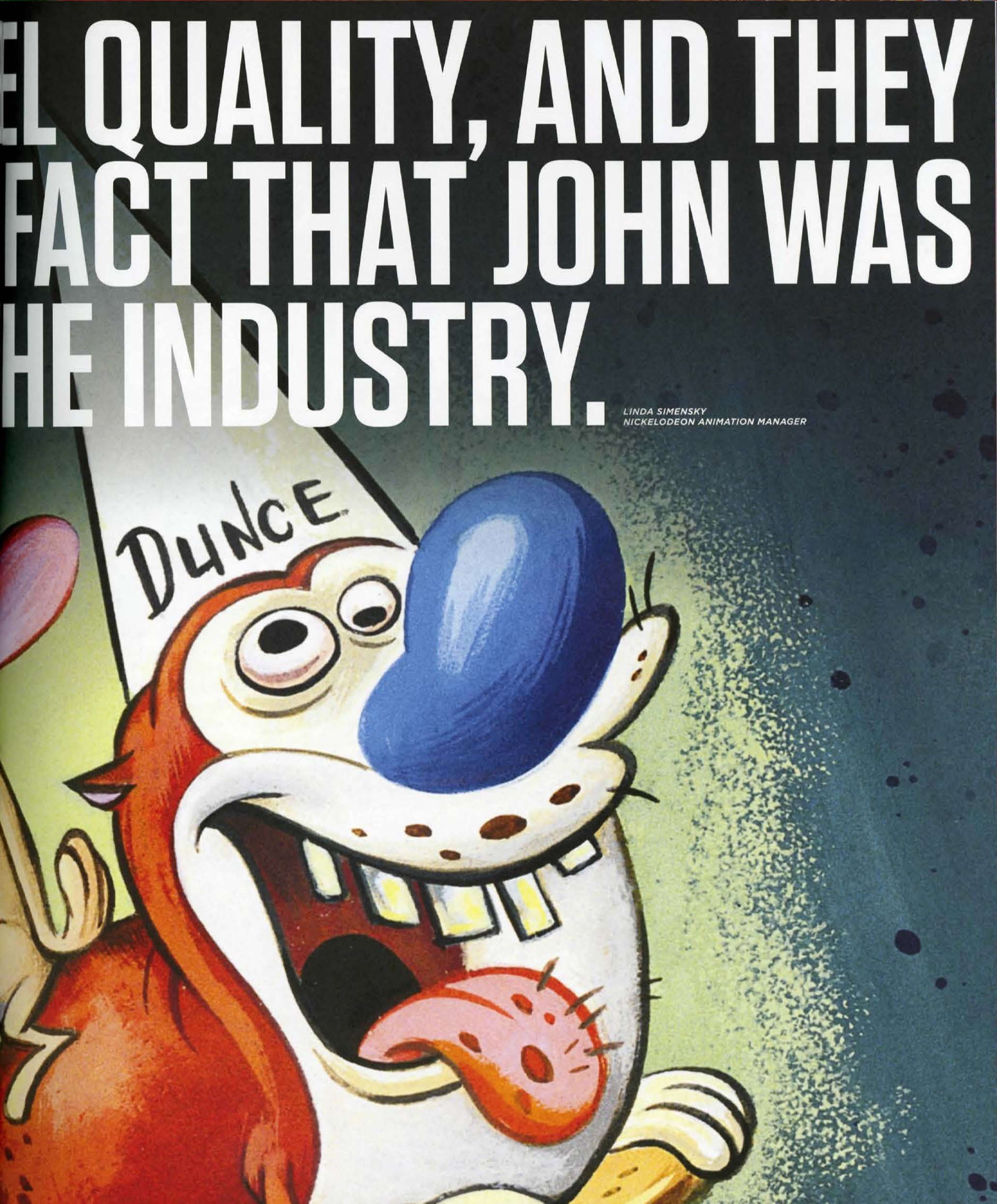
After Nick tested the pilot episode on a focus group, Coffey told John K. "The kids laughed a lot more at your cartoon than the others." It wasn't only kids who laughed. Within six episodes *Ren and Stimpy* became a breakout hit. College students organized parties around the show. Critics hailed the bizarre fusion of classic and modern animation, and no one seemed to mind that both lead characters weren't quite in their right minds. Ren and Stimpy were funny, outrageous, and a perfect fit for Nickelodeon's vision of what cartoons should be.

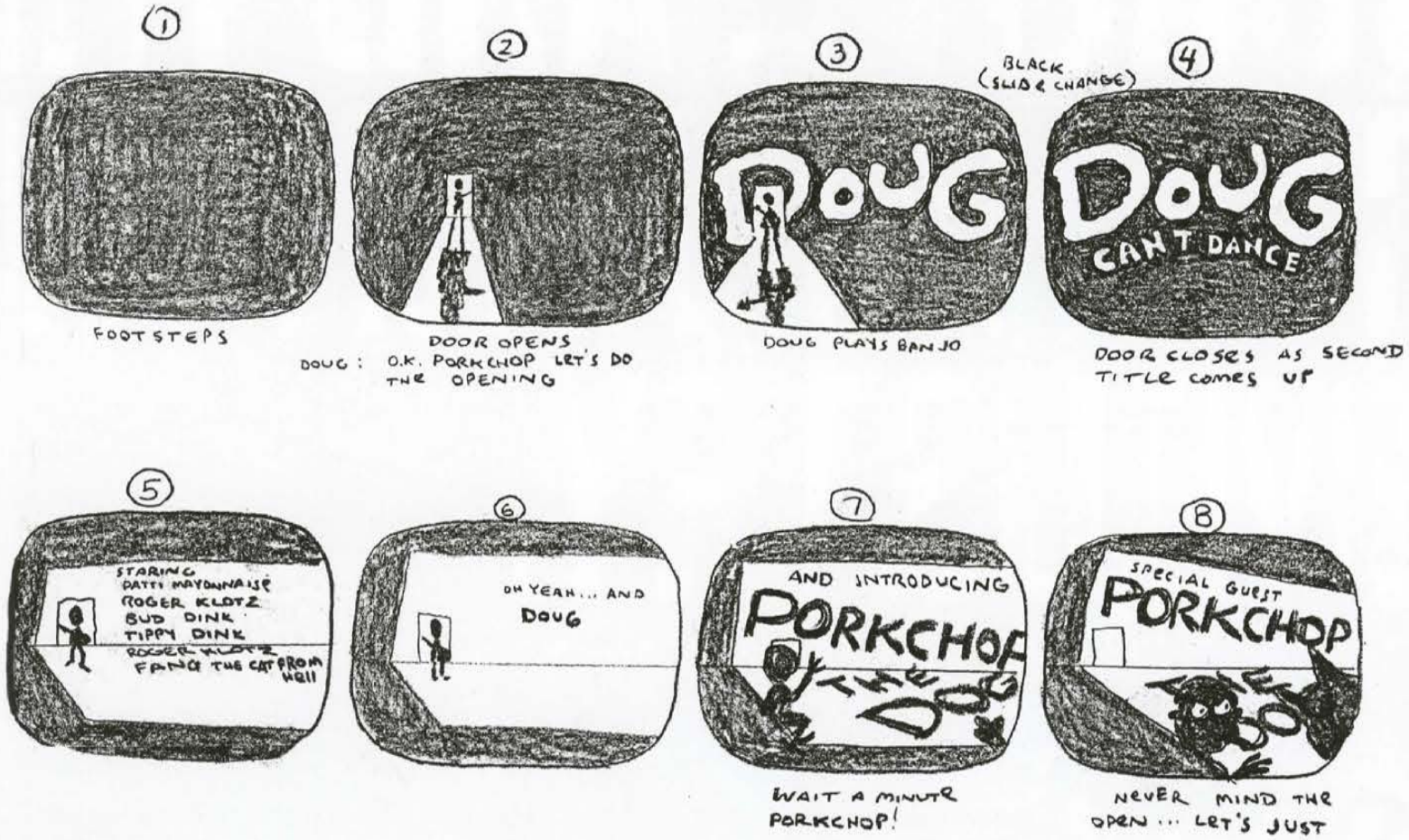
NICK-NACK NO. 139

Canadian-born animator John Kricfalusi was the brains behind Ren and Stimpy. His wild pitch session is still remembered by Nick executives.

EL QUALITY, AND THEY FACT THAT JOHN WAS HE INDUSTRY.

LINDA SIMENSKY
NICKELODEON ANIMATION MANAGER





At the same time, a frustrated writer of children's books also made his pitch. Jim Jinkins, author of a children's book titled *Doug Got a New Pair of Shoes,* met with Vanessa Coffey and immediately won her over. *Doug* took shape as a sort of animated counterpart to the live-action Nick hit *Clarissa Explains It All.* Doug Funnie narrates each episode in his own words from his point of view. The slightly nerdy, lovable protagonist faces problems in school, the pangs of tween love, and the competition of a rival.

In keeping with the Nickelodeon ethos, adults are rarely seen in the episodes; the closest thing to a recurring adult character is Doug's bohemian older sister Judy, who appears to be in her early 20s. Doug's world is a kid's world the way kids see it. Doug keeps a journal, pines for pretty classmate Patty Mayonnaise, and is prone to imagining himself as superpowered Quailman or suave secret agent Smash Adams. His best friends are "Skeeter" Valentine and his playful dog Porkchop.

Producer David Campbell described how Doug resonated with the preteen viewers that Nick considered their prime audience. "This was intrinsic to all the stories—this crazy emotional extreme where he imagines the worst thing that could possibly happen to him ... and almost at the same time imagines the best thing that can happen. He actually manages it pretty well, like a straight, even calm, sweet, kind, gentle person. Which he is. But his emotional inner life has much more turmoil." In short, Doug Funnie was a near-perfect representative of the Nickelodeon viewer in animated form. Kids could easily understand poor Doug's turmoil when facing peer pressure, asking a girl to a dance, coming up with a big classroom project, or dealing with schoolyard nemesis Roger Klotz.

The third series was the answer to questions its cocreator Paul Germain had when, as an eight-year old child looking at his baby brother, asked himself, "What if he's just putting me on? What if the minute I leave the room he suddenly becomes sentient and can talk? What if he does that only when I'm not looking?"

NICK-NACK NO. 059

Gentle and introspective where *Ren and Stimpy* was wild and off-kilter, *Doug* would enjoy a four-season, 52-episode original run on the network.

DOUG FUNNIE WAS A NEAR-PERFECT
REPRESENTATIVE OF THE NICKELODEON
VIEWER IN ANIMATED FORM.
Doug
MR. SWIRLY
CREATED BY
JIM JINKINS

RUGRATS

THE DESIGNS ARE EXTREME. THE EDGE WE HAD WAS THAT WHEN YOU TURNED ON THOSE SHOWS, THEY DIDN'T LOOK LIKE ANYTHING ELSE THAT WAS ON TV.

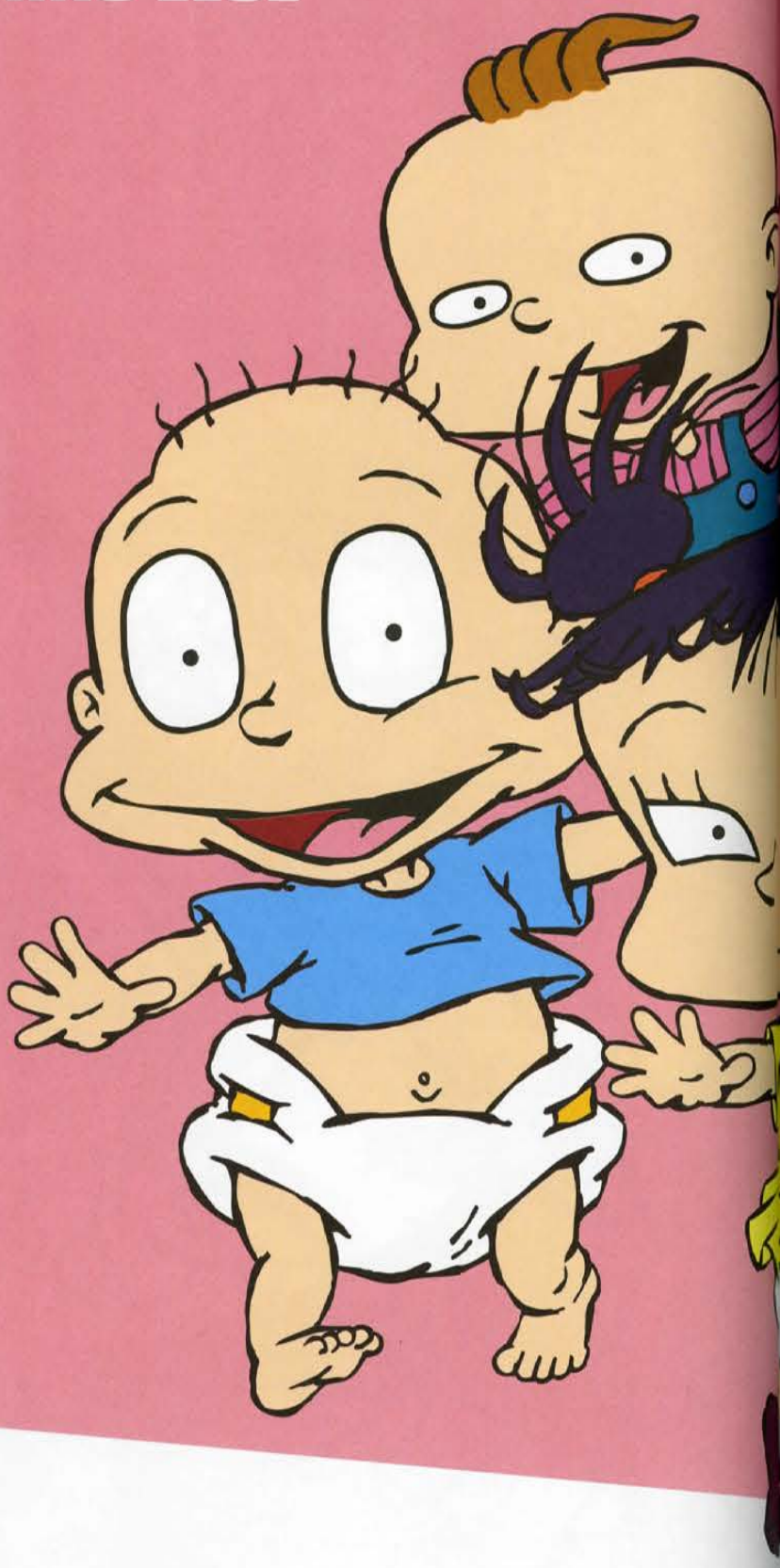
CRAIG BARTLETT / STORY EDITOR / RUGRATS

Creative partner Arlene Klasky, who had just given birth, thought it was a great idea for a series and worthy of a pitch to Nick. Klasky was one of the founders of the Klasky Csupo animation studio, and the five-minute pilot for what became *Rugrats* was assembled there. Adventurous Tommy Pickles leads a troupe of babies through various situations, accompanied by his not-as-brave pal Chuckie Finster and fraternal twins Phil and Lil. Opposing them is slightly older know-it-all Angelica, who is anything but angelic, and is the only character that can speak to both babies and parents. The look of the series was quirky and unique, using design more common in Eastern European animation, a risk that Nick was willing to take in order to give kids something different from the average fare. Story editor Craig Bartlett admitted: "The designs are extreme. The edge we had was that when you turned on those shows, they didn't look like anything else that was on TV."

Peter Chung, who worked on design, agreed. "Before that time, there were no characters that looked like that."

Nick's gamble paid off. *Rugrats* spawned a then-record 172 episodes for Nick, surpassed only by a little yellow sponge. It won four Daytime Emmy Awards, seven Kids' Choice Awards, and has its own star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame (at 6600 Hollywood Blvd.).

172
EPISODES



NICK-NACK NO. 383

Klasky Csupo helped to trademark Nick's unique look in the 1990s. The studio also animated *Aaahh!!! Real Monsters* and *The Wild Thornberrys*.

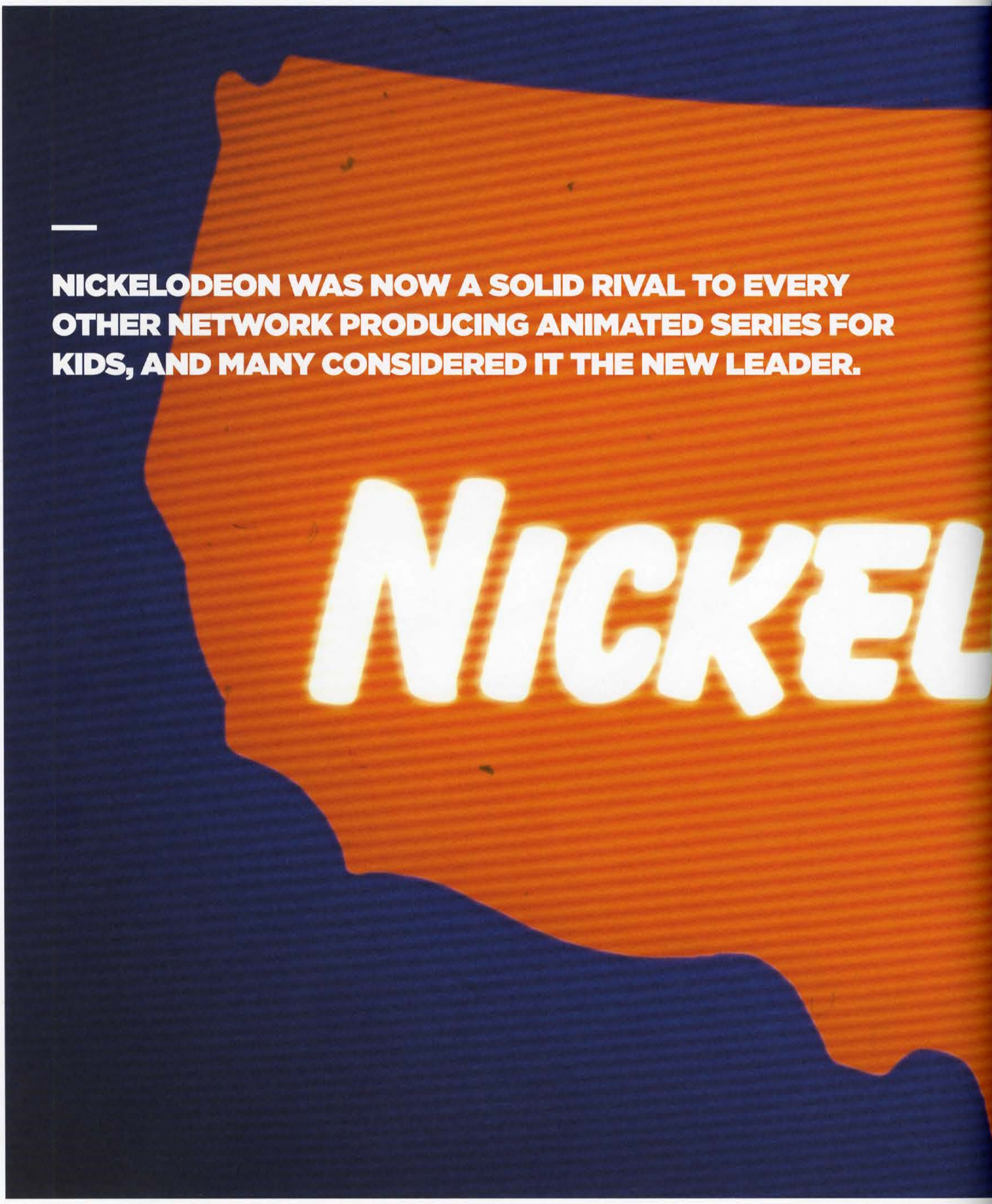
NICK-NACK NO. 823

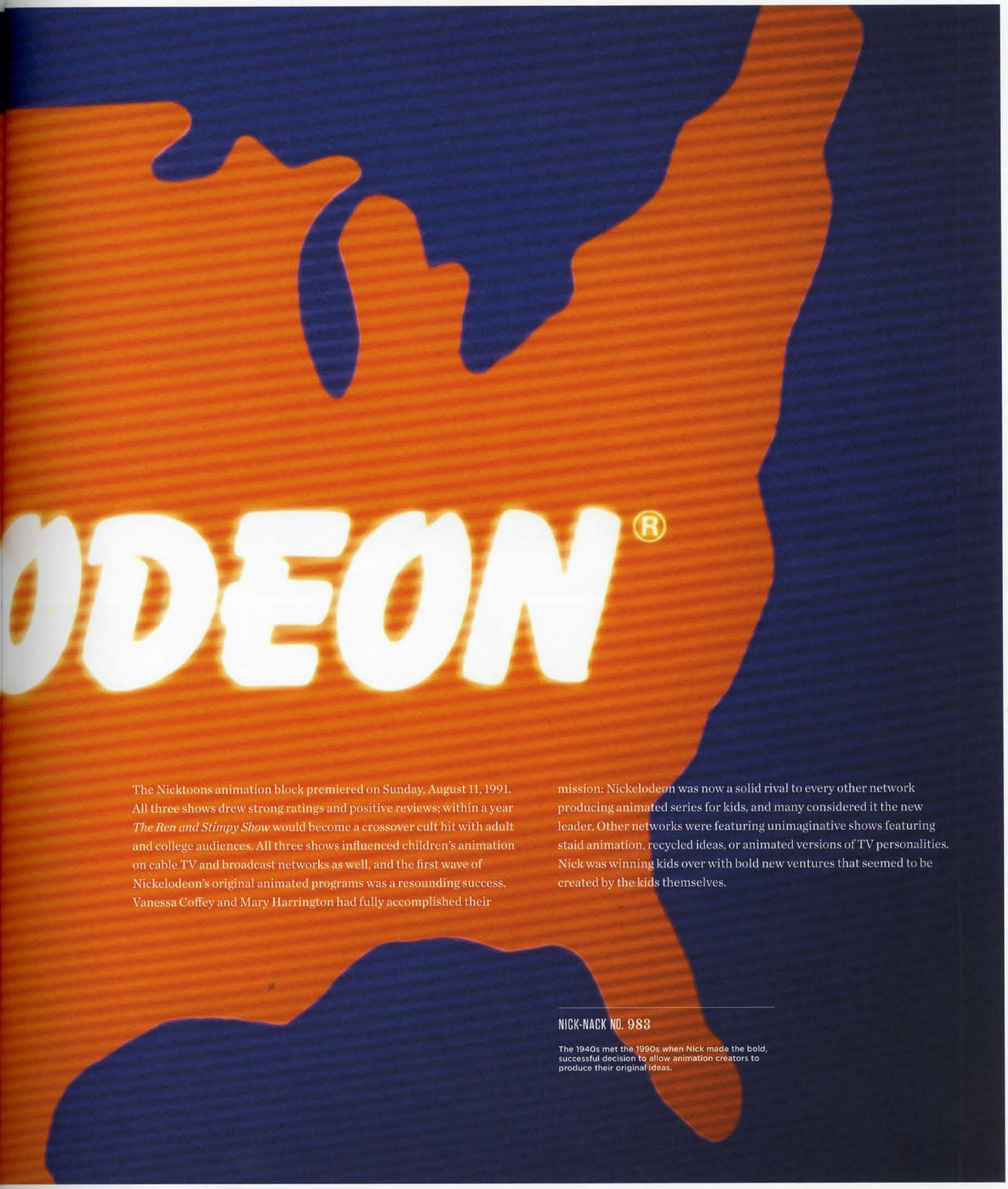
There was some concern by cocreator Arlene Klasky and *Rugrats* producers over including Angelica in the cast, who Klasky considered bratty. Angelica, however, became a favorite among viewers.

NICK-NACK NO. 577

Rugrats was more than just babies: the kids' parents and grandparents were far more competent than typical adults on Nick shows.

NICKELODEON WAS NOW A SOLID RIVAL TO EVERY OTHER NETWORK PRODUCING ANIMATED SERIES FOR KIDS, AND MANY CONSIDERED IT THE NEW LEADER.





The Nicktoons animation block premiered on Sunday, August 11, 1991. All three shows drew strong ratings and positive reviews; within a year *The Ren and Stimpy Show* would become a crossover cult hit with adult and college audiences. All three shows influenced children's animation on cable TV and broadcast networks as well, and the first wave of Nickelodeon's original animated programs was a resounding success. Vanessa Coffey and Mary Harrington had fully accomplished their mission: Nickelodeon was now a solid rival to every other network producing animated series for kids, and many considered it the new leader. Other networks were featuring unimaginative shows featuring staid animation, recycled ideas, or animated versions of TV personalities. Nick was winning kids over with bold new ventures that seemed to be created by the kids themselves.

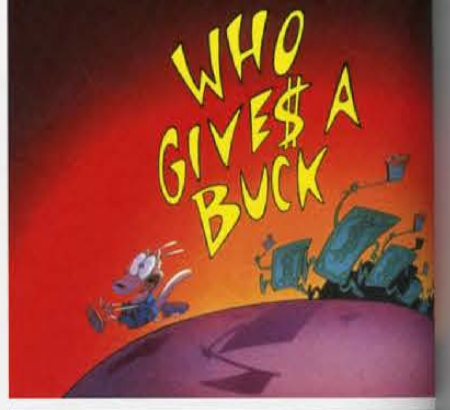
NICK-NACK NO. 983

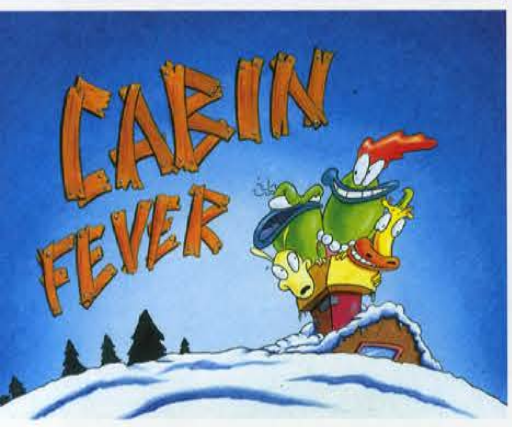
The 1940s met the 1990s when Nick made the bold, successful decision to allow animation creators to produce their original ideas.

BEDFELLOWS

TO HECK AND BACK

RINSE & SPIT

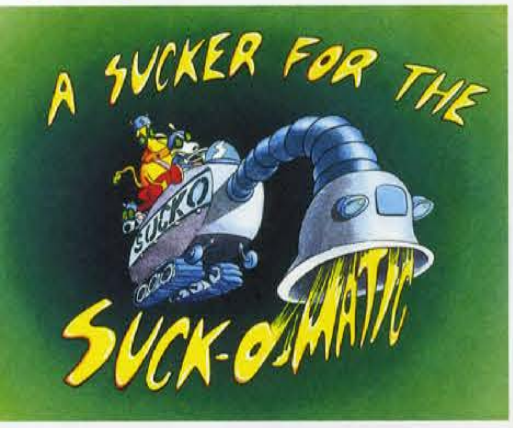

WHO GIVE$ A BUCK

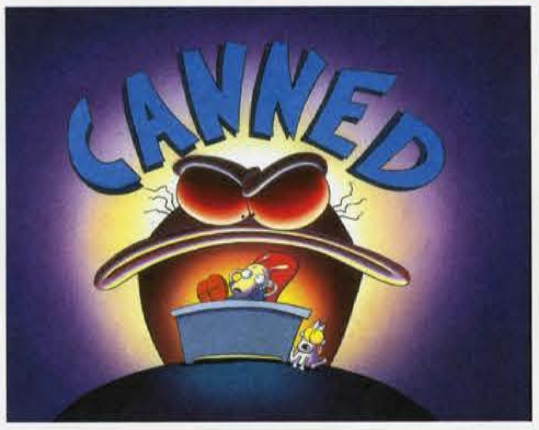

CABIN FEVER

POWER TRIP

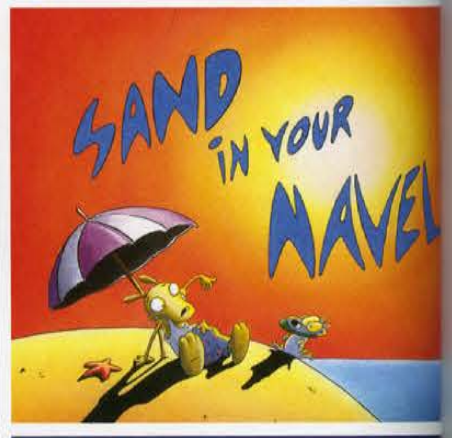
FLU-IN-U-ENZA

LOVE SPANKED

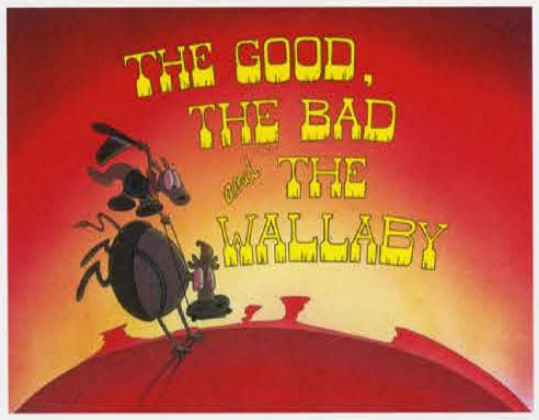

A SUCKER FOR THE
SUCK-O-MATIC

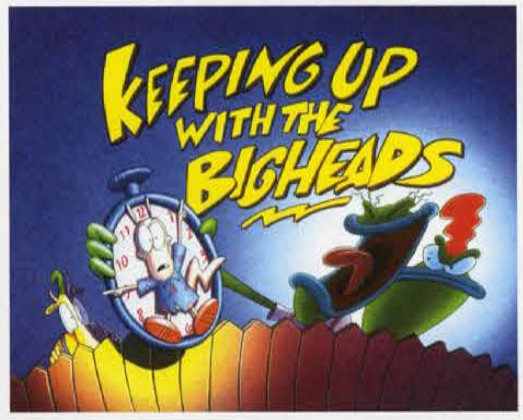

CANNED

EAT JOE!
DINER
WHO'S FOR DINNER?


SAND IN YOUR NAVEL

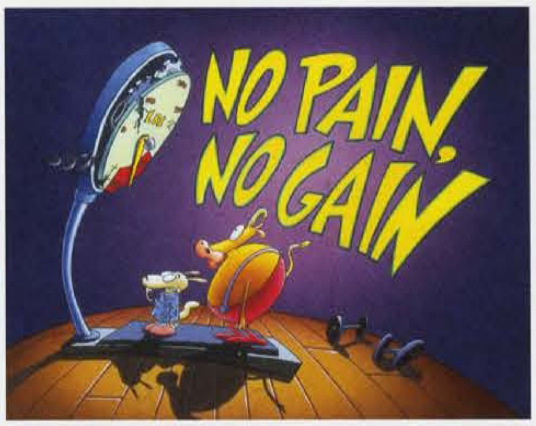
POPCORN PANDEMONIUM


THE GOOD, THE BAD and THE WALLABY


KEEPING UP WITH THE BIGHEADS

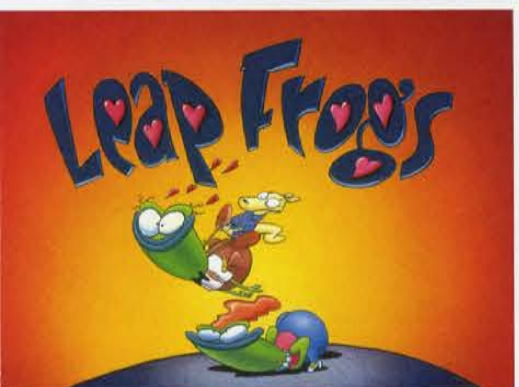
CARNIVAL KNOWLEDGE

JET SCREAM


NO PAIN, NO GAIN

DIRTY DOG

Spitballs


Leap Frogs

SKID MARKS

TRASH-O-MADNESS

CLEAN LOVIN'

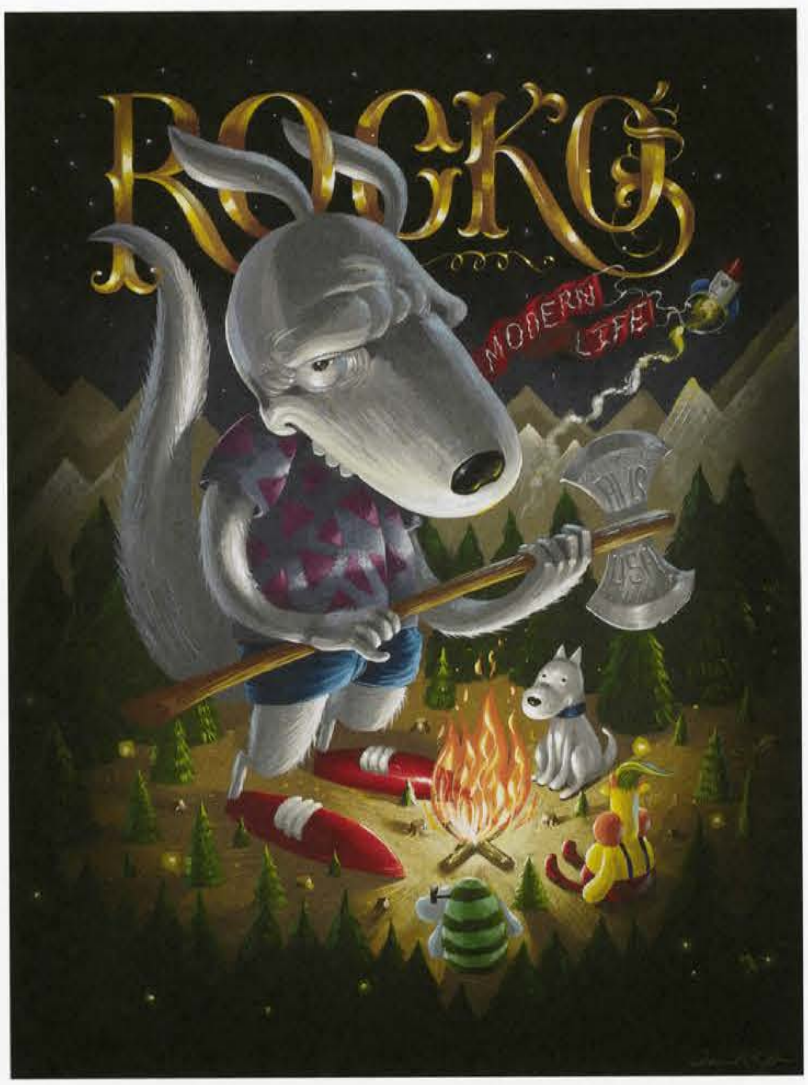
Nick continued to canvass the creative field for more animated fare, and by the mid-1990s, the network developed two more series. *Rocko's Modern Life,* which aired from 1993–96, was the quirky brainchild of commercial artist Joe Murray. Rocko is a cheerful wallaby in a Hawaiian shirt who faces the quandaries of (you guessed it) modern life with the company of best friends Heffer Wolfe, the cow, and Philbert, a hypochondriac turtle. Spunky was Rocko's eternally hungry terrier.

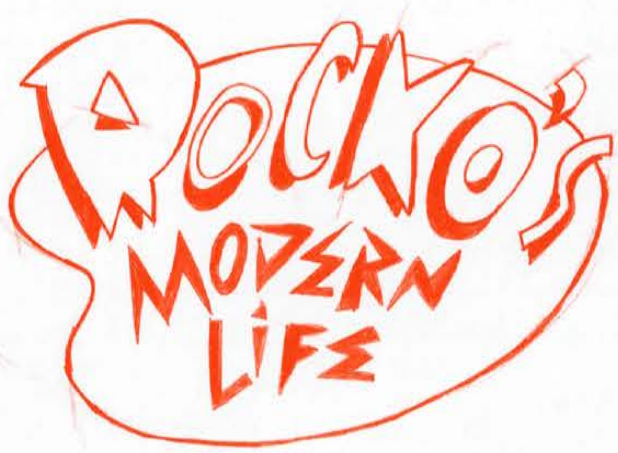
Rocko was intentionally surrealistic, one of the most sophisticated animated series on TV at the time. Its appealing look recalled classic Warner Bros. with a touch of underground comics style. The sharp social satire was irresistible to a population on the brink of dealing with the complications of independent life. Of course, modern life never included universe-devouring vacuum cleaners or brain-eating TV sets, but *Rocko* never claimed it was predictable, either.

ROCKO WAS INTENTIONALLY SURREALISTIC, ONE OF THE MOST SOPHISTICATED ANIMATED SERIES ON TV AT THE TIME.

Rocko was different in that the target audience was 20-something college students. Nickelodeon was seeking edgier animation and gave Murray and his crew broad creative control. The writers continually slipped decidedly adult jokes, off-color innuendo and double-entendres into the show. The wallaby worked full-time in a comic book store, further identifying him with a young, hip audience.

Rocko's Modern Life was also notable as the training ground for many of the artists, writers, directors, and voice actors who later brought *SpongeBob SquarePants* to Nickelodeon (including creator Steve Hillenburg).





NICK-NACK NO. 043

Creator Joe Murray fashioned Rocko after a wallaby he saw at a zoo that was seemingly unfazed by the raucous crowds.

THE MONSTERS LIVED IN A CITY DUMP AND REEKED OF BODY ODOR. FLATULENCE AND OTHER DISGUSTING SECRETIONS ENLIVENED THEIR ADVENTURES.

If monsters were real, they'd probably have their own city, society, rules, and laws. Nothing like ours, but that was the premise of *Aaahh!!! Real Monsters.* This offbeat series ran from 1994–97. The series was developed by Gabor Csupo and Peter Gaffney, and was Klasky Csupo's second effort for Nick following *Rugrats.* Three young monsters, Ickis, Oblina, and Krumm, are attendees of a monster school in New York City. Under the tutelage of master instructor The Gromble, they learn to scare humans and perform other assorted mischief. Nickelodeon, with kids always in mind, happily presented the weird, gross entertainments they loved. The monsters live in a city dump and reek of body odor. Flatulence and other disgusting secretions enliven their adventures.

Still, the critters had heart. Csupo told the *Los Angeles Times,* "There is a real friendship going on in our show. The three monsters are realizing they can only get ahead if they help out each other and use (their) own strengths and weaknesses together."

The monsters looked nothing like cute, cuddly animals. Again, Klasky Csupo relied on its unique European house style. Nick programming director Herb Scannell related that the show's character designs were influenced by the animated film *Yellow Submarine.* As usual, Nick was spot on. The show became a hit and was nominated for a Daytime Emmy Award in 1995.

In 1994 Nickelodeon introduced a yearly program called The Big Help. This offering was more of an initiative than an entertainment show, challenging kids to become active in environmental, health, and community issues. Every year requests were considered for refurbishing a run-down local park, and Nickelodeon supplied the money and labor to make the project happen. The show enlisted kid stars from its shows for its outreach appeal, and has served an educational/service function for its young audiences.

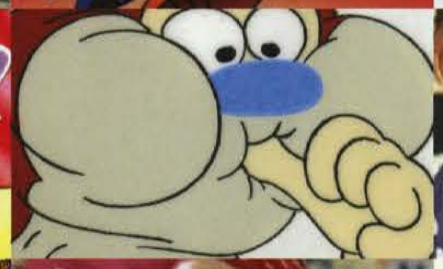
NICK-NACK NO. 401

Monsters they may be, but Klasky and Csupo disdained horror and developed a series about some endearing and very unusual kids.

AV·1

BUTTER

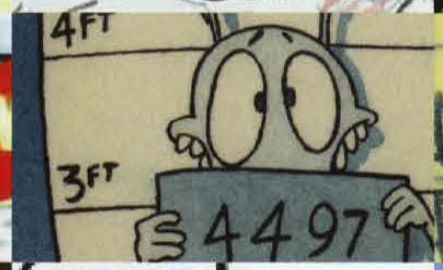
ALL THAT



HIGHLY OVERACTIVE
/MAGINATION THAT
COMIC BOOKS AND
THE WORLD AROU
IN BIGGER THAN
CARICATURES.

Rock

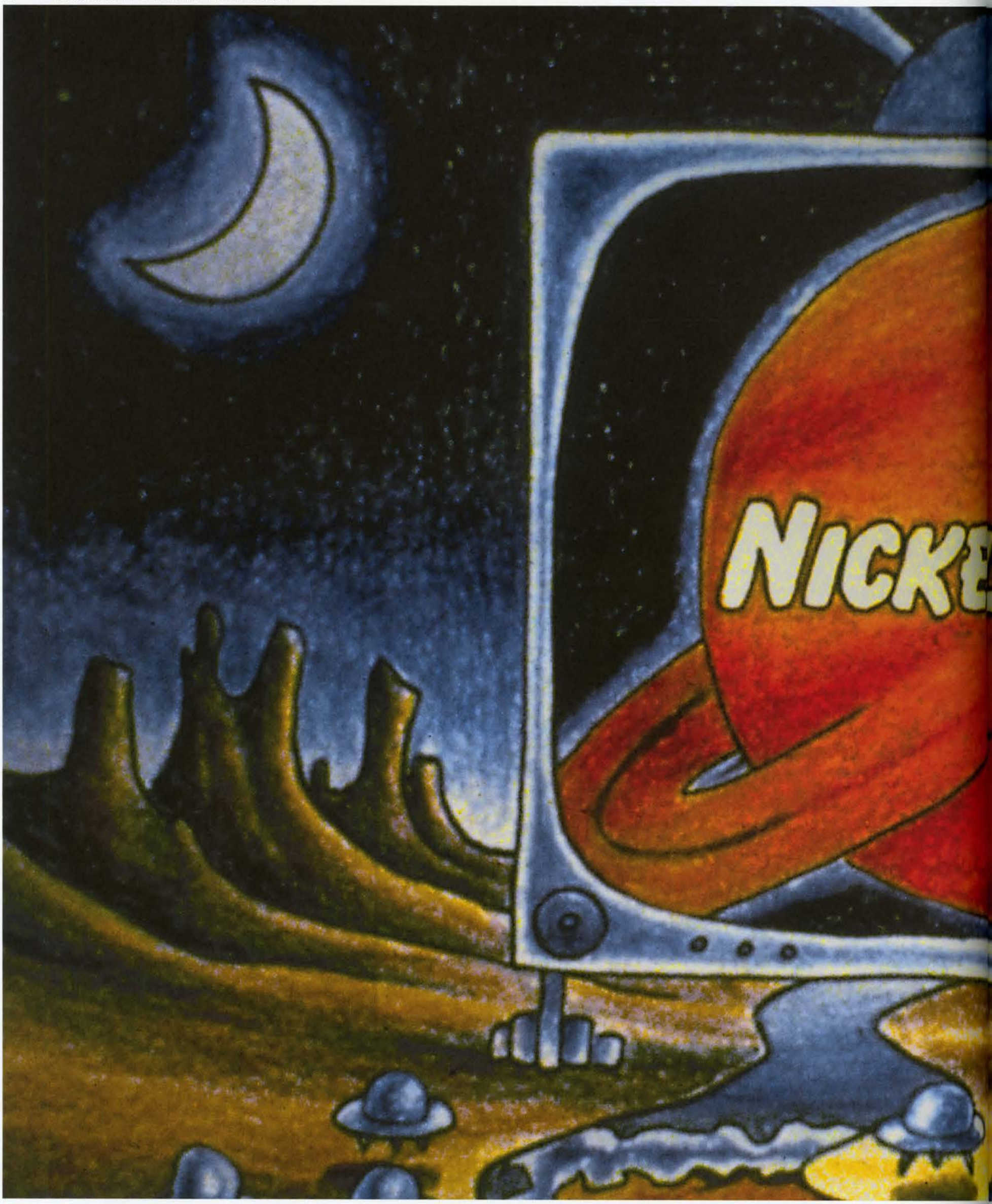
BIG SHOT
PRODUCER

NICKELODEON

4FT
3FT
4497

BY 1995 NICKELODEON EMERGED AS THE DOMINANT CABLE TELEVISION NETWORK FOR CHILDREN, AND SOME OF THE PROGRAMS GARNERED ADULT AUDIENCES AS WELL. WHILE IT SEEMED THAT THE WORLD WAS A HAPPY BALL OF ORANGE SLIME, EVEN BETTER THINGS WERE STILL TO COME.

NICK-NACK NO. 641

No idle boast: by 1995 Nickelodeon was the undisputed trendsetter in kids' TV, with cable ratings that surpassed many other networks.


NICKE

PEERLESS NETWORK FOR KIDS

ERA 3

PAGES 72–105

NICK-NACK NO. 719

No adaptation of the Nickelodeon logo was too wild for the kids' network. Nick's artists created dozens of them over the years, each one a mini showcase of imagination.

BY THE MID-NINETIES NICKELODEON HAD ESTABLISHED ITSELF AS A PEERLESS NETWORK FOR KIDS SEEMINGLY UNDER THE DIRECTION OF KIDS THEMSELVES. NICKELODEON WAS NOT JUST A NETWORK FOR KIDS; IT WAS THEIR FRIEND.

President Gerry Laybourne had a solid vision of where the network was heading. "We are here to accept kids, to make them feel good about themselves," Laybourne said. "We don't give out the message 'this is what a cool kid should look like or be like.' If we want to make kids feel good, we have to embrace them all."

NICK-NACK NO. 127

SpongeBob was originally Spongeboy, but the name was already copyrighted to a kitchen sponge!

SPONGEBOY

Nick's stable of live-action stars was young, talented, and appealing, and the network continued to excel at unique new ways of showcasing their talents. Moreover, the network continually found new ways of deepening and expanding its footprint in the lives of kids. Nickelodeon also moved into the realm of theatrical movies, serving up three theatrical films (including a mega-hit based on one of its own series).

At the same time, Nick kept up a commitment to high-quality animated shows, producing one of the best programs for preschoolers ever aired. Five new animated series were added to the network's stable, and Nickelodeon would cap this spectacular era by introducing animation's next superstar and cementing its reputation as the #1 network for a diverse and culture-savvy young audience.

NICK-NACK NO. 443

Nicktoons TV was launched in May 2002 and was originally commercial-free. It was the first of Nick's many "sister networks."

NICKTOONS™

STRAIGHT MAN KENAN AND HIS FOIL KEL WERE LIKENED TO JERRY LEWIS AND DEAN MARTIN.

It could be said that the successful variety show *All That* was Nickelodeon's version of *Saturday Night Live* in the sense that many of its young actors graduated to roles in other shows, series, and films. In 1996, the success of *All That* launched two of its kid stars into a comedy series of their own. Kenan Thompson and Kel Mitchell headlined *Kenan & Kel.* Kids loved the misadventures of the teens, voting them "favorite TV show" at the 1998 Kids' Choice Awards. *Kenan & Kel* also reflected Nickelodeon's commitment to depicting the sort of ethnic diversity kids encountered in their everyday lives.

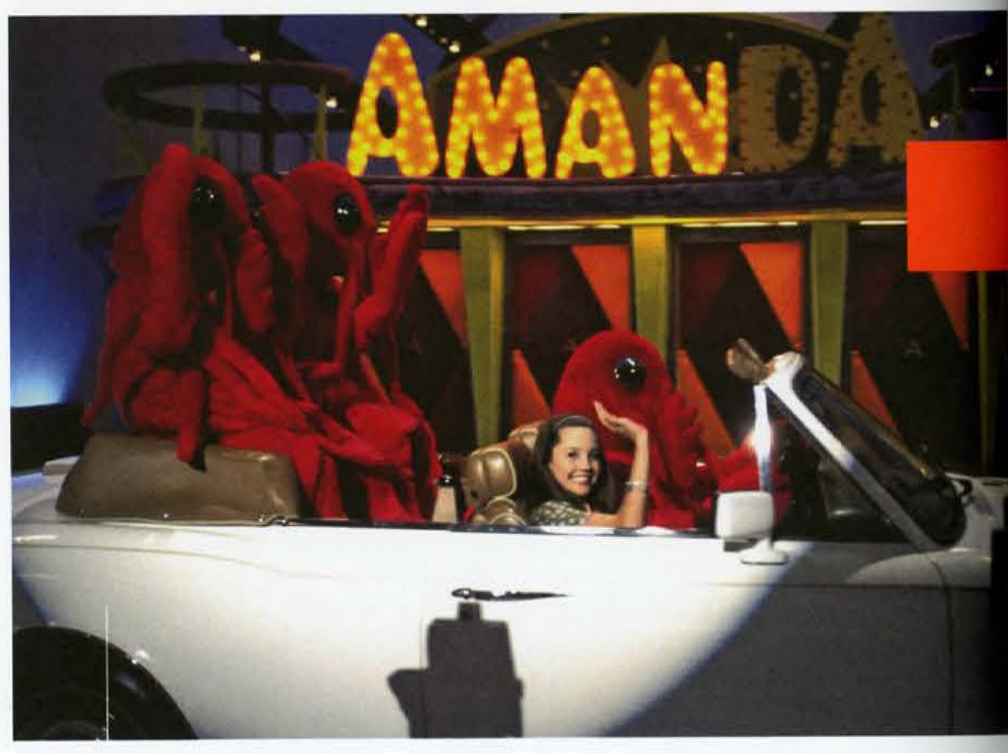
Set off by a jaunty Coolio theme song ("Aw, Here it Goes") in which the duo is hailed as "like Siegfried and Roy, Abbott and Costello, Magic and Kareem, or Penn and Teller," straight man Kenan and his foil Kel were also likened by reviewers to Jerry Lewis and Dean Martin (and even *The Honeymooners'* Ralph Kramden and Ed Norton). Kenan Thompson would later achieve stardom on *Saturday Night Live* and in various movies before returning to Nickelodeon in 2011. Senior vice president of programming Cyma Zarghami admitted that the idea "came out of the fact that these two had such great chemistry together." That chemistry clicked for 65 hilarious episodes and a made-for-TV movie. Once again, the network's commitment to shows starring kids and made for kids was a glowing success.

NICK-NACK NO. 037

Besides making Kenan Thompson and Kel Mitchell teen stars, *Kenan & Kel* was the funniest "buddy" show since *The Odd Couple.*

Kenan and Kel were not the only graduates of *All That* who continued to star for Nick. *The Amanda Show,* featuring Amanda Bynes, Drake Bell, and Nancy Sullivan as the key players in the 1999 series, was a variety sketch show set inside a fictional TV comedy, and the talented cast pulled off surprisingly sophisticated spoofs of real TV shows, including faux commercials for products such as Meatloaf Crunch cereal, Popper Pants, and Homework Hut (a kid's dream!).

One of the best-remembered recurring sketches on *The Amanda Show* is "Moody's Point," a dead-on parody of daytime soap operas complete with comic overacting. Meanwhile, the show's star, Amanda, is constantly avoiding irritating super-fan Penelope Taynt (also played by Bynes) while trying to come up with new material. Adults show up only as guest stars and, like Maureen McCormick of *The Brady Bunch* and Danny Bonaduce of *The Partridge Family,* they are former child stars themselves. *The Amanda Show* validated Nickelodeon's confidence in casting kids for their premier productions. It was a winning formula, and the kids watching at home surely agreed.



NICK-NACK NO. 593

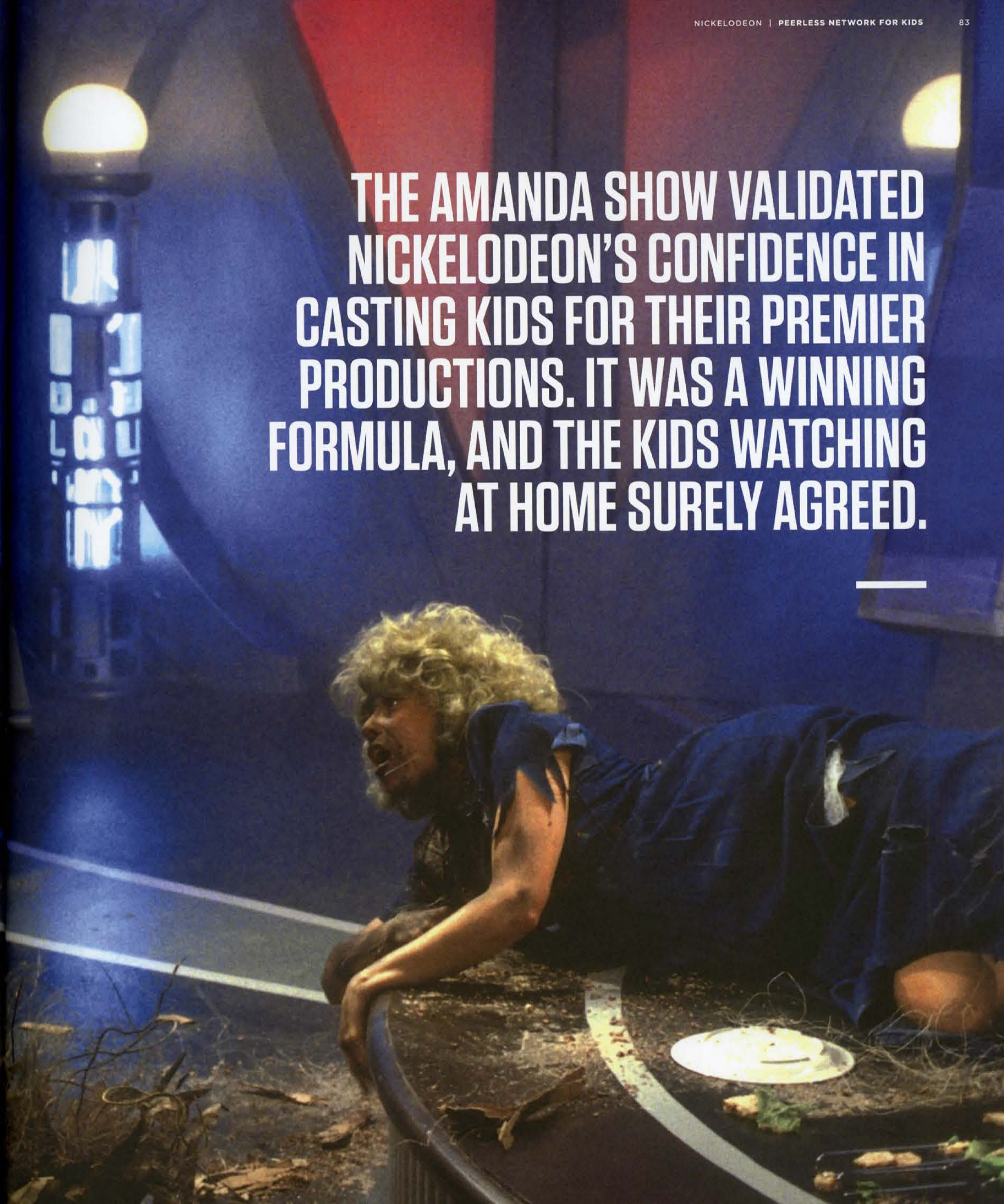
The Amanda Show continued Nick's parade of sketch-comedy skits. The presence of Amanda Bynes was a huge part of its charm.

THE AMANDA SHOW

NICK-NACK NO.
367

A variety show loaded with funny skits and enough appealing stars to turn audiences into fans—that's exactly what Nick had with *The Amanda Show*.

40
EPISODES



THE AMANDA SHOW VALIDATED NICKELODEON'S CONFIDENCE IN CASTING KIDS FOR THEIR PREMIER PRODUCTIONS. IT WAS A WINNING FORMULA, AND THE KIDS WATCHING AT HOME SURELY AGREED.

In 1996, Nickelodeon premiered a comedy sketch show of a different nature. *KaBlam!* was an animated series that confirmed Nick's dedication to finding the most imaginative and unique animated creations the network could find. Because of this commitment, fans were treated to offbeat shorts such as the adventures of ferret roommates Sniz and Fondue, the efforts of Prometheus (a purple alien) to educate Bob (a dimwitted caveman) 900,000 years ago, and the adventures of super-heroine Jetcat. Cartoon hosts Henry and June presented the shorts, animated in various media as stop-motion, cutout, Claymation, and traditional methods. Many had started out as interstitials or stand-alone shorts on the network. *KaBlam!* would eventually feature nearly 20 shorts, some recurring and a few one-shots. Between them, Henry and June enacted a story of their own before opening a comic book that started the next short. The show ran for four seasons, weaving in new shorts to keep the show fresh and evolving.

KaBlam! generated two breakout hits, *Action League Now!* and *Angela Anaconda*. *Action League Now!* used stop-motion action figures to show the misadventures of the most hapless team of superheroes (like Thundergirl, The Flesh, and Stinky Diver) ever to bungle a mission. *Angela Anaconda* was a Canadian series that used clip-art animation (à la Monty Python's Terry Gilliam) to tell stories about an eccentric young tomboy who made up for her unpopularity by fancying herself a French sophisticate. Whether Nickelodeon's variety shows were live-action or animated, they were huge successes that millions of kids tuned in to watch.

NICK-NACK NO. 073

Nick's ongoing fascination with original animation fueled *KaBlam!* The popular *Action League Now!* segment put a silly new spin on superheroes.

NICK-NACK NO. 233

"Would you like fries with that?" Kenan Thompson and Kel Mitchell had it their way in this funny, engaging movie hit.

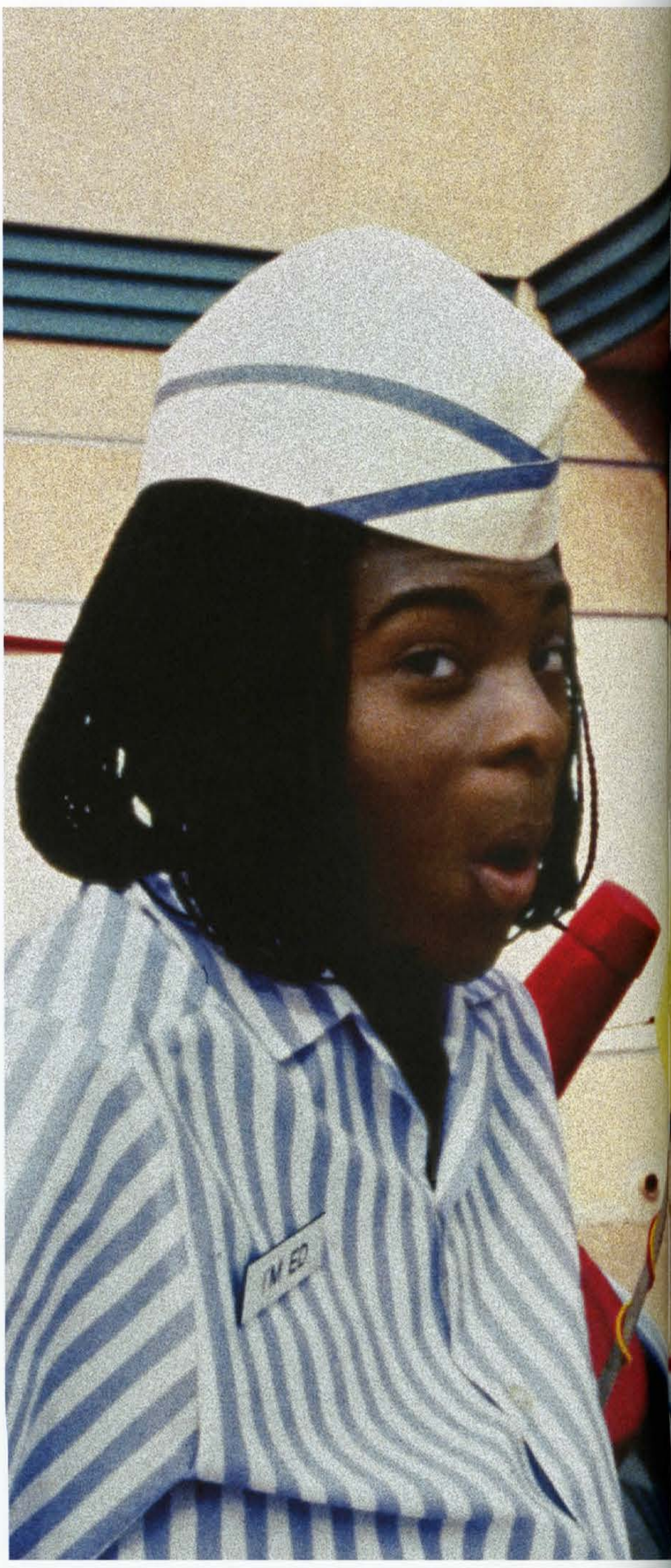
Nickelodeon's success with its target audience attracted national notice. *The New York Times* reported on October 2, 1996, that "During the summer, the cable network Nickelodeon attracted more children, ages 2 to 11, to its Saturday morning shows than any of the broadcast networks did, even though Nick is available in only about 70 percent of the 97 million homes with television."

Having conquered cable television, Nickelodeon next turned its attention to developing theatrical feature films. Nickelodeon Movies came into being in 1995 after parent company Viacom purchased Paramount Pictures. The number of younger ticket buyers was on the increase, making motion pictures a prime market for the special attention Nick gave to kids' entertainment.

"We were looking for movies that were contemporary, with a kid's point of view and creator driven," recalls Julia Pistor, vice president of Nick Movies. "The creator could be the writer, the director—Nickelodeon put the creator in the center. Our mantra was not to have a 'house style.' Each film would be its own unique vision, connecting kids to their world through story."

Its first effort was the 1996 film *Harriet the Spy,* adapted from Louise Fitzhugh's popular 1964 book, starring Michelle Trachtenberg. This tale of a girl facing bullying, unpopularity, and the joys and sorrows of sixth-grade life resonated strongly with its young audiences and made back twice its cost. Most importantly, *Harriet the Spy* established Nickelodeon as a coming player in the motion picture industry.

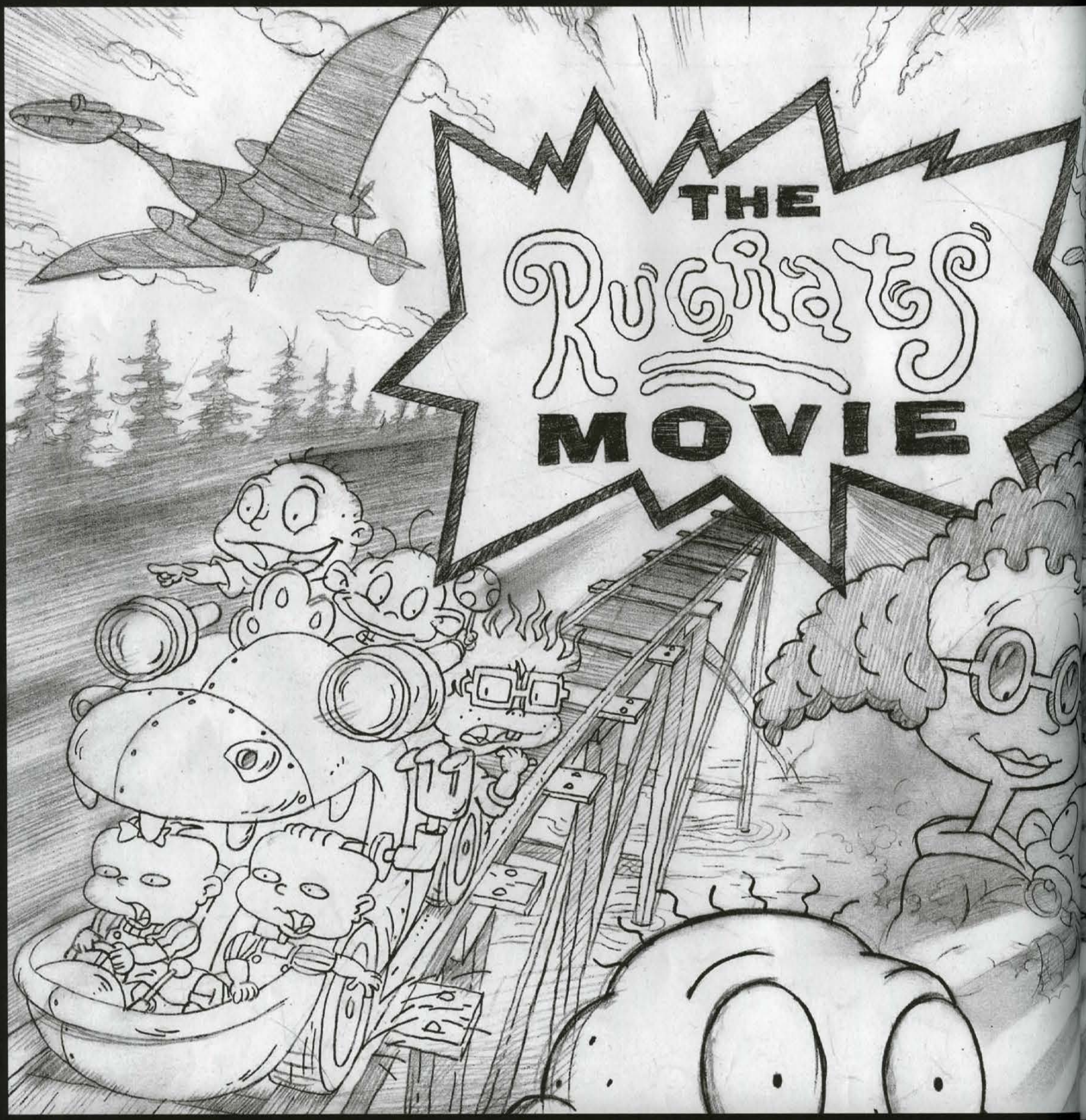
Nickelodeon went to its established talent pool in 1997 with the energetic *Good Burger* starring Kenan Thompson (as Dexter) and Kel Williams (as Ed). "We stretched the Nickelodeon brand to now include family audiences," said Pistor. "We recognized that 'funny' was a number one way to connect with the audience. It didn't have to be 'ha-ha' falling out of a building funny, but character-driven comedy. That was at the top of our list when developing features." Adapted from the sketch on *All That,* the story featured the teen pals caught up in a war between competing burger joints. The movie earned praise for its high spirits, and turned another profit for the network.



GOOD BURGER

THE MOVIE

1997


THE
Rugrats
MOVIE

THE RUGRATS MOVIE WAS THE FIRST NON-DISNEY ANIMATED FILM TO BREAK THE $100 MILLION MARK, AND ITS WORLDWIDE POPULARITY FIRMLY ESTABLISHED NICKELODEON AS A FEATURE FILM PLAYER TO BE RECKONED WITH.

NICK-NACK NO. 373

The Rugrats Movie was the first release from Nickelodeon Movies based on a Nicktoon. Two sequels followed in 2000 and 2003: *Rugrats in Paris: The Movie* and *Rugrats Go Wild*.

Nick's greatest triumph, however, was its third feature film, *The Rugrats Movie*. Using the characters from the popular animated series proved to be a brilliant move on Nick's part. Kids fell in love with Tommy Pickles' new baby brother Dil, thrilled to the adventures of the lost babies careening around in a Reptar wagon, and enjoyed the lively, quirky animation. Parents found themselves enthralled as well. Peter Stack of the *San Francisco Chronicle* summed up what most reviewers seemed to say. "Drawn with the big-headed, big-eyed appeal that has made the TV show hot among the diaper crowd," he wrote, "the film has a satirical edge that won't be lost on adults but retains a sense of innocence and a joyful toddler's outlook." The movie's tagline? "An adventure for anyone who's ever worn diapers."

Even Nick had to be surprised at the amazing box office generated by the film. *The Rugrats Movie* was the first non-Disney animated film to break the $100 million mark, and its worldwide popularity firmly established Nickelodeon as a feature film player to be reckoned with. It came as no surprise, though, that the Rugrats would go on to star in two animated movie sequels in the years to come.

BLUE'S
CLUES

THESE CARTOONS HAVE THE LOOK AND FEEL AND SNAP OF THE AMERICA OUR KIDS ARE GROWING UP IN. THEY TREAT OUR CHILDREN WITH RESPECT, WHICH IS WHY WE WILLINGLY HAND OUR CHILDREN OVER TO THEM, AS WE WOULD TO A BABYSITTER.

THE NEW YORK TIMES
NOVEMBER 27, 1998

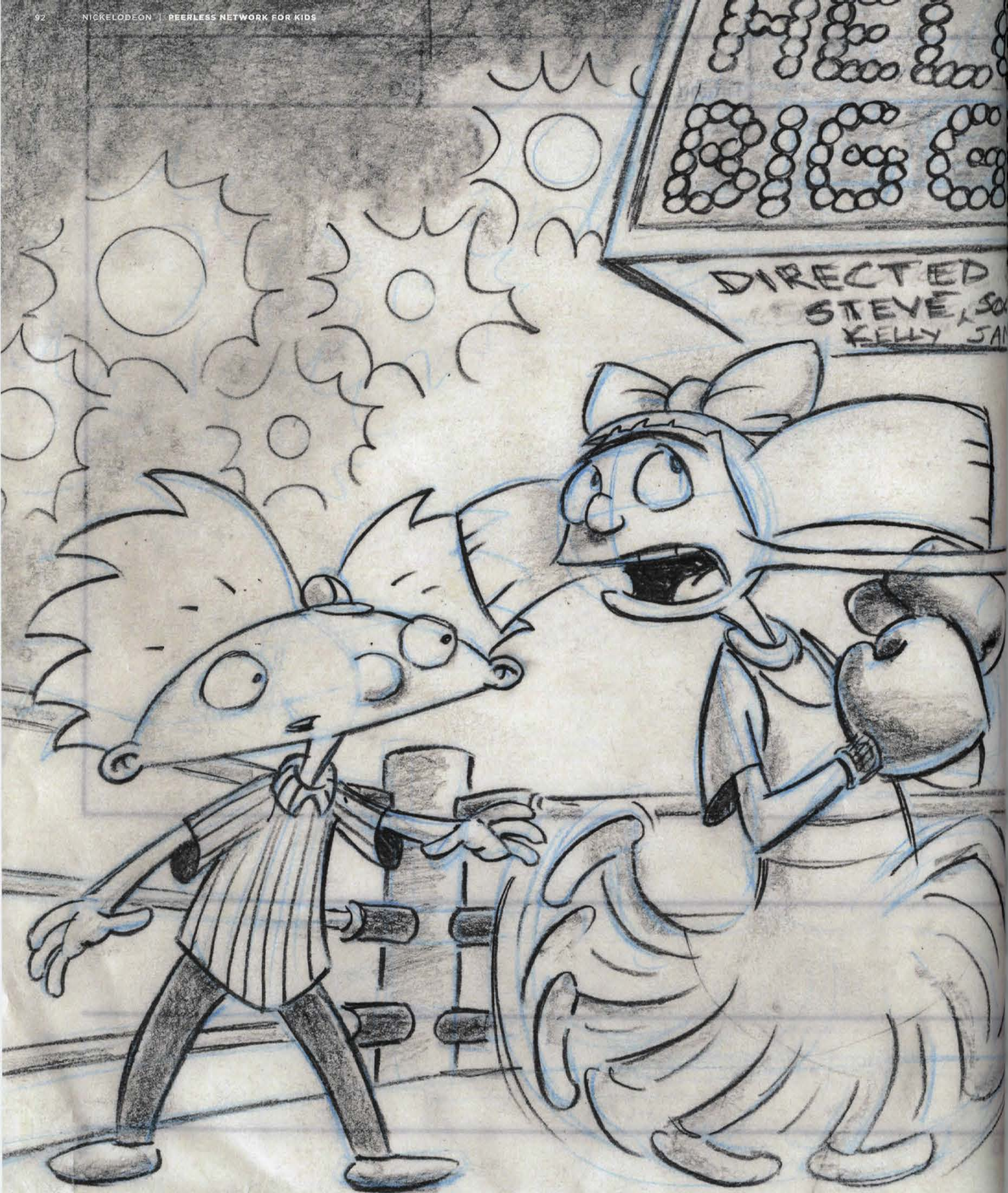
Nickelodeon gave its youngest viewers a special gift in 1996 with *Blue's Clues*. Brown Johnson, executive vice president of Nick Preschool, hired three young graduates, Traci Paige Johnson, Todd Kessler, and Angela Santomero, to create a unique learning show for toddlers. Brown Johnson recalls of the creators, "They were all babies, they were fresh out of college and I just had to trust them." Trusting the younger generation, however, was Nick's trademark. Those "babies" came equipped with cutting-edge research on child learning and development.

The team created an interactive show starring a genial young host named Steve Burns, who owns an animated spotted dog named Blue. The goal of the show is to solve a puzzle, and Blue leaves helpful clues for the kids in the form of blue paw prints. Steve interprets the clues for the preschoolers to Blue's delighted approval. Before long *Blue's Clues* was the most popular preschool show since *Sesame Street.* Donovan Patton replaced Steve Burns in 2002, but the show never skipped a beat; *Blue's Clues* soared in popularity, becoming the highest-rated show on television for preschoolers. It would win nine Emmy Awards and introduce American Sign Language to children's programming. Beginning in 1999, *Blue's Clues* went on a live tour of American cities, and by 2002, over two million people had attended the shows. Once again, Nickelodeon used young talent to produce outstanding programming for its core audience. As Brown Johnson put it, "We do believe kids come to TV with an active mind."

At the same time, Nickelodeon kept its commitment to quality animated programming. As *The New York Times* noted on November 27, 1998, "These cartoons have the look and feel and snap of the America our kids are growing up in. They treat our children with respect, which is why we willingly hand our children over to them, as we would to a babysitter." Nothing could have summed up Nickelodeon's impact more accurately.

NICK-NACK NO. 907

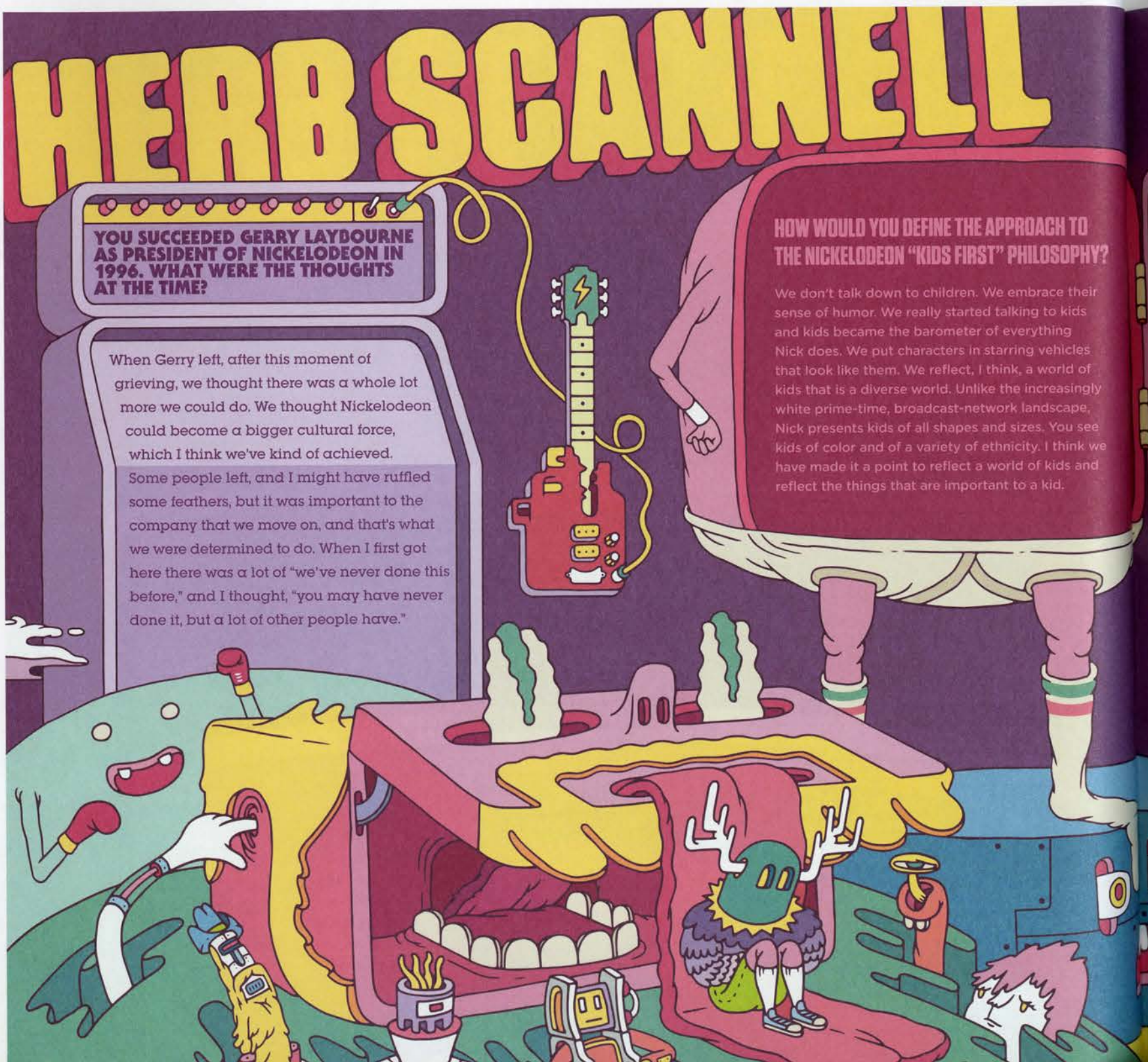
Blue's Clues was originally titled "Blue's Prints." Nick's savvy spotted dog named Blue became the most popular puppy in the preschool world during the mid-1990s.


DIRECTED
STEVE, SO
KELLY JA

AND
KELLY JAMES
STORYBOARDS
ALDIN BARROZA
ASST. STORYBOARDS

THIS ISN'T XEROX
TELEVISION

HERB SCANNELL



YOU SUCCEEDED GERRY LAYBOURNE AS PRESIDENT OF NICKELODEON IN 1996. WHAT WERE THE THOUGHTS AT THE TIME?

When Gerry left, after this moment of grieving, we thought there was a whole lot more we could do. We thought Nickelodeon could become a bigger cultural force, which I think we've kind of achieved. Some people left, and I might have ruffled some feathers, but it was important to the company that we move on, and that's what we were determined to do. When I first got here there was a lot of "we've never done this before," and I thought, "you may have never done it, but a lot of other people have."

HOW WOULD YOU DEFINE THE APPROACH TO THE NICKELODEON "KIDS FIRST" PHILOSOPHY?

We don't talk down to children. We embrace their sense of humor. We really started talking to kids and kids became the barometer of everything Nick does. We put characters in starring vehicles that look like them. We reflect, I think, a world of kids that is a diverse world. Unlike the increasingly white prime-time, broadcast-network landscape, Nick presents kids of all shapes and sizes. You see kids of color and of a variety of ethnicity. I think we have made it a point to reflect a world of kids and reflect the things that are important to a kid.

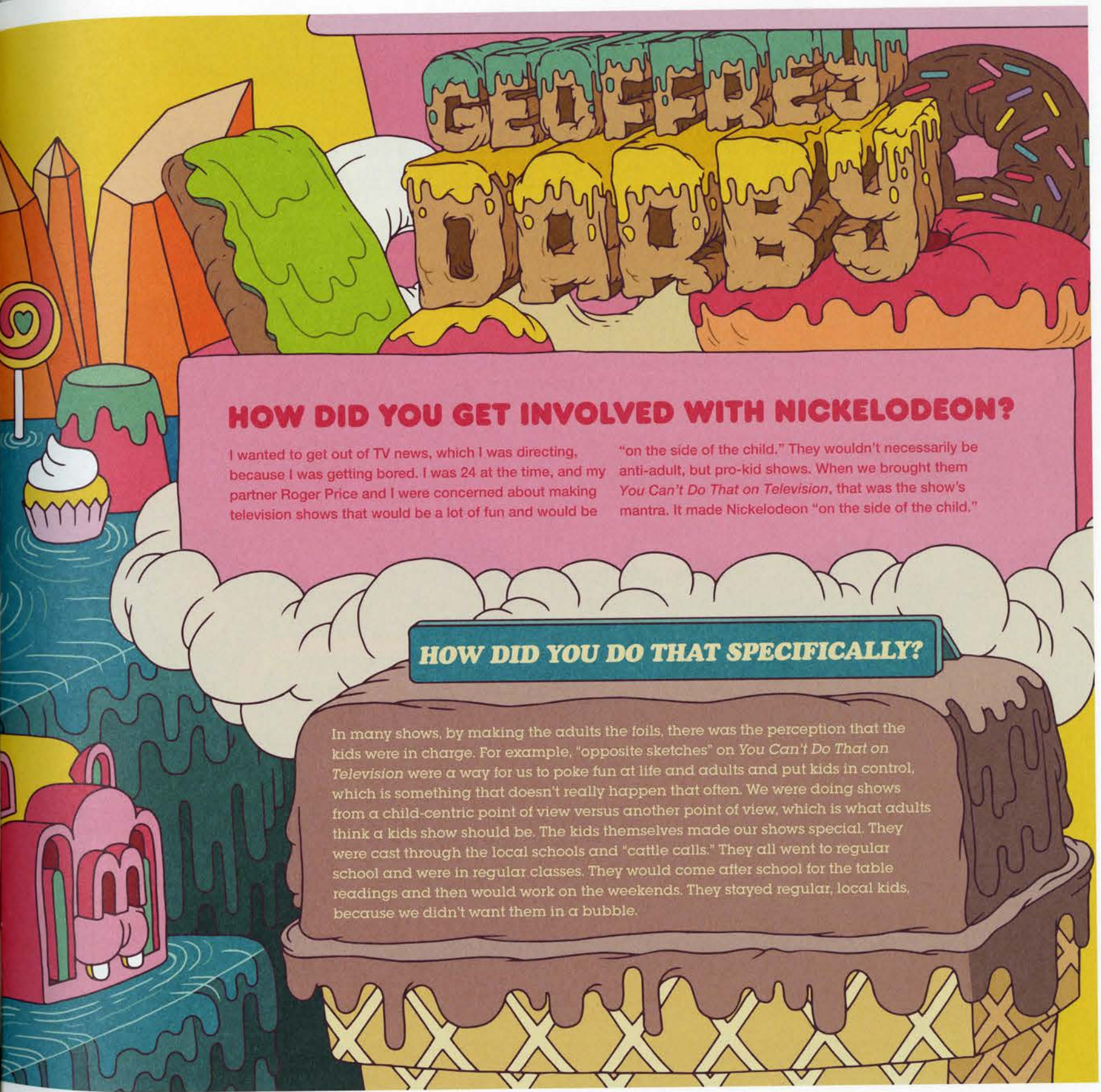
HASN'T ANIMATION ALWAYS BEEN IMPORTANT TO THE VISION OF NICKELODEON?
If you were a producer with original ideas in animation, one place you could *not* go to was television, but you could trace (the top ratings) to when we launched animation. We had *Rugrats* before *SpongeBob SquarePants*. Now SpongeBob is like our Bugs Bunny. The more shots you have (at developing shows), the better chance you have to creating characters that could pop.
WHEN DID NICK START TO SEE THIS SORT OF THING HAPPEN?
I remember the rough cut of the very first *SpongeBob SquarePants* cartoon. SpongeBob is at the grill, and is accompanied by a 30-year-old recording of Tiny Tim warbling, "Livin' in the sunlight, lovin' in the moonlight, havin' a wonderful time!" When I heard that, I thought, this show is going to go places we don't really expect. It could be a kinder, gentler world if SpongeBob became a global icon. *Rugrats*? Out of the gate it seemed like it had the look of something special. But who knew it would be so big? *The Wild Thornberrys* started out airing only two times a week. But then, kids started voting with the remote. Out of the gate, it was a performer.

WERE YOU EVER SURPRISED AT NICKELODEON'S TREMENDOUS SUCCESS?

Who would have thought 20 years ago that a cable network would outperform any broadcast network in what had traditionally been the bastion for broadcasting on Saturday morning? Through all types of competition, Nickelodeon has emerged and become the top choice for kids. More kids watch Nickelodeon in prime time than any broadcast or cable network. More kids watch Nickelodeon Saturday morning than any broadcast or cable network. We were now positioned to make Nickelodeon the preeminent kids' brand of the next century.

WHAT DOES THE FUTURE HOLD FOR NICKELODEON?

Innovation is the key to Nick's future. When I got involved in developing programs, what I thought was great about kids' television was that there was so much that hadn't been done. I still think that is true. We've made our mark because we're not doing "Xerox television." People who work at Nickelodeon like kids' television. They're not gigging to get someplace else. This is a good place to make kids' television. The kids' business has been formulaic for so long. We really stretch the boundaries of kids' TV, and that's where we got a lot of points with kids. Everybody else, they've got to play catch-up with us.



HOW DID YOU GET INVOLVED WITH NICKELODEON?

I wanted to get out of TV news, which I was directing, because I was getting bored. I was 24 at the time, and my partner Roger Price and I were concerned about making television shows that would be a lot of fun and would be "on the side of the child." They wouldn't necessarily be anti-adult, but pro-kid shows. When we brought them *You Can't Do That on Television*, that was the show's mantra. It made Nickelodeon "on the side of the child."

HOW DID YOU DO THAT SPECIFICALLY?

In many shows, by making the adults the foils, there was the perception that the kids were in charge. For example, "opposite sketches" on *You Can't Do That on Television* were a way for us to poke fun at life and adults and put kids in control, which is something that doesn't really happen that often. We were doing shows from a child-centric point of view versus another point of view, which is what adults think a kids show should be. The kids themselves made our shows special. They were cast through the local schools and "cattle calls." They all went to regular school and were in regular classes. They would come after school for the table readings and then would work on the weekends. They stayed regular, local kids, because we didn't want them in a bubble.

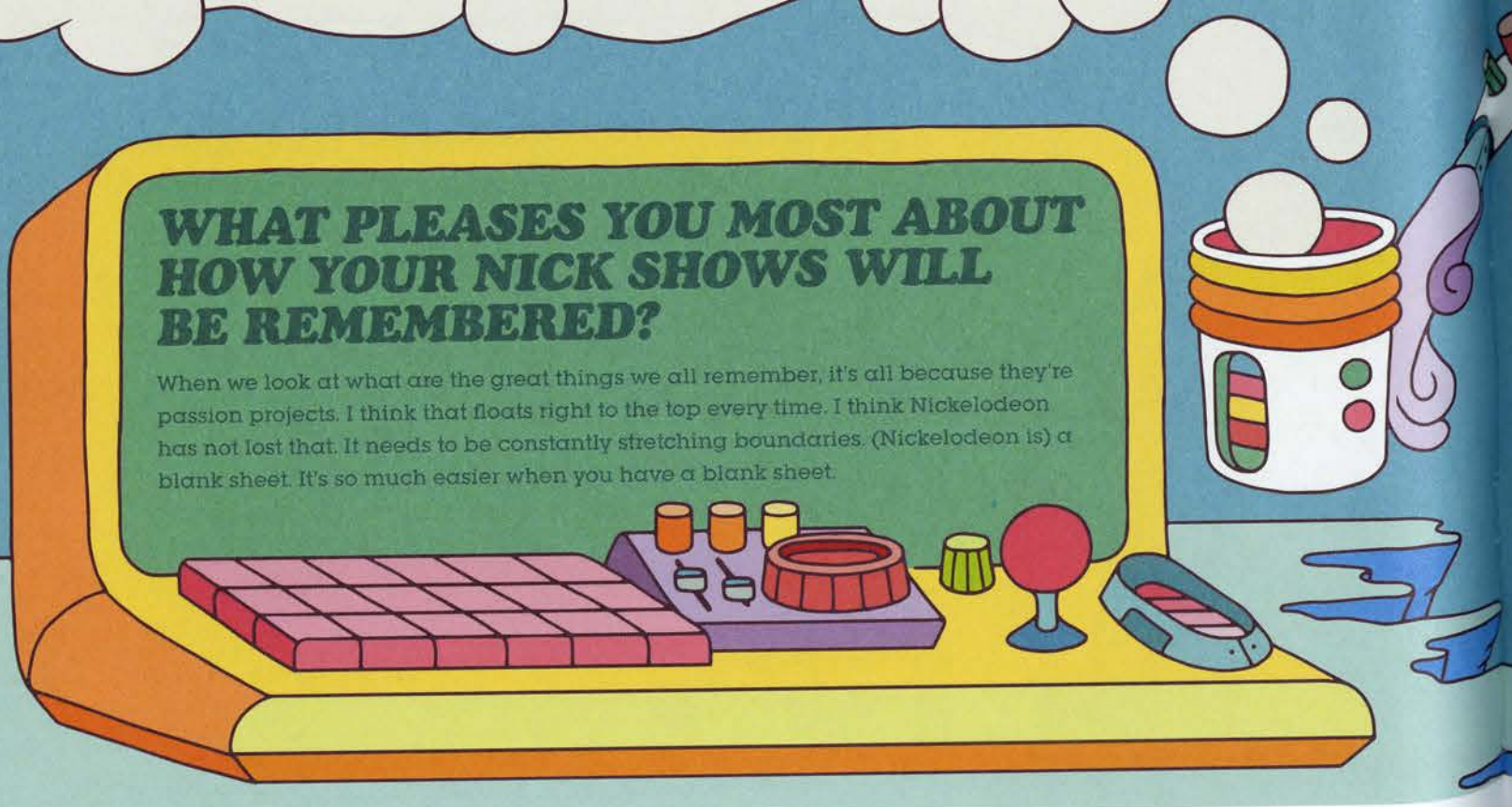
DID YOU HAVE ANY SHOWS INFLUENCED BY EARLIER STYLE KIDS PROGRAMS?

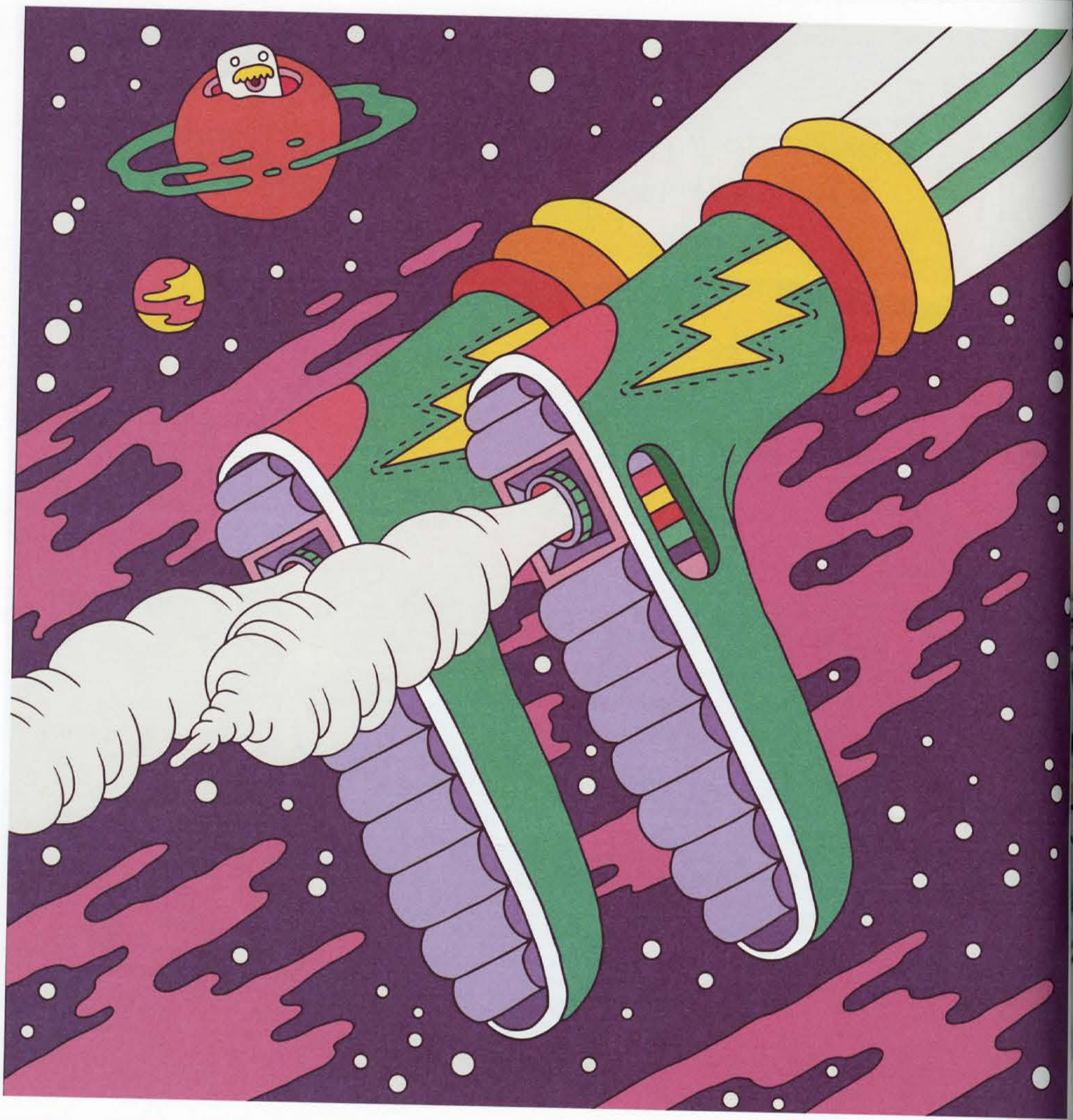
We were influenced, obviously, by slapstick. We knew what kids laughed at, and slapstick was one of them. A lot of the situations were kid situations. The scatological elements were a lot of "11-year-old humor." That's all. It's what they laugh at. If you have a group of kids who are pre-adolescent and you say the word "vomit," they would all laugh. You know that's what they're going to laugh at, so you use it. And also "blackout" comedy, where you set up the joke, you give the punch line, and then you go to another scene. That's bangity-bang-bang. I like being at the inventive cusp of things, and that's what really excites me. Nickelodeon really was an invention factory. It was a very different world. We invented a lot of things that really made a difference, from game shows to creator-driven animation. We believed in the creator and now that's sort of *de rigueur* in animation.

It certainly wasn't back when we were doing animation properties. It was very much *Transformers* and products that were toy-based. We didn't do it just to be different. We did it because we believed in the creator as the driving force, and not market research. I think that when you deal with any property like this—for children and for adults—the great ones are those that came from somebody who really had a passion for and would fight for that story and those characters, and not have them sort of *bent* by market research. That's why Nickelodeon never did anything like *My Little Pony*, which came out of market research. That doesn't come out of some person having a passion to create these voices. That was a passion to create money.

WHAT PLEASES YOU MOST ABOUT HOW YOUR NICK SHOWS WILL BE REMEMBERED?

When we look at what are the great things we all remember, it's all because they're passion projects. I think that floats right to the top every time. I think Nickelodeon has not lost that. It needs to be constantly stretching boundaries. (Nickelodeon is) a blank sheet. It's so much easier when you have a blank sheet.





THE FAIRLY ODDPARENTS FEATURED FAST ACTION, RAPID-FIRE DIALOGUE, HIP IN-JOKES, AND BROAD HUMOR. COSMO AND WANDA WERE RATHER LIKE A HIP, SNAPPIER VERSION OF GEORGE BURNS AND GRACIE ALLEN.

In 1996, *Hey Arnold!* made its debut and was nothing like typical animated fare. Creator Craig Bartlett built his show around an orphan protagonist living in a boarding home with his grandparents. Arnold's real parents disappeared while on a humanitarian mission, never to be seen again. Arnold's world is suffused with a magical realism, where urban legends could be real and kids faced the challenges of growing up in spite of every challenge an unpredictable world threw at them. Bartlett also insisted on using genuine children as voice artists, the better to give the sort of kids-eye view that Nickelodeon prized.

Arnold is a caring, empathetic kid who devotes himself to helping his friends or fellow inhabitants of his boarding home solve their problems. His last name is never revealed in the show. Although Arnold is relentlessly pursued by the love-struck, insecure school bully Helga Pataki, he always keeps a cool (if football-shaped) head. "Arnold is a little bit Zen," said creator Craig Bartlett. "He's kind of a little Buddha, who seems wiser than his years and the world he's living in. I thought that Helga plays a crucial role in worshipping all the time for our benefit."

Certainly not your typical cartoon, this unusual animated series served to underscore the sort of risk Nickelodeon frequently takes in bringing unique, kid-based shows to the network's fold. *Hey Arnold!* was also another Nickelodeon hit that eventually spawned a feature-length theatrical movie.

In 1998, Nick launched the series *The Wild Thornberrys*. Part animated adventure and part nature show, the series focused on a traveling family that produced nature documentaries. Many episodes, in fact, had an educational aspect included. The star of the bunch is redheaded Eliza who, after rescuing a shaman disguised as a trapped animal, is granted the power to converse with any animal. Her favorite is Darwin, an erudite chimpanzee. No one else in the family knows this, however, setting up many comic situations. The Klasky Csupo team responsible for *Rugrats* produced the animation, and the character designs were perhaps the most off-kilter in the history of kids' programming. Most episodes focused on saving endangered species, experiencing life as animals lived it, and fostering awareness of creature habits and habitats. The show was a favorite among Nick's executives as well. Cyma Zarghami found Eliza fascinating because "she's got this magical power that she doesn't abuse, and she is a hero to the animals." Eliza was a hero to the kids too, and *The Wild Thornberrys* became one of the top five-rated kids' shows on TV. Before long, the Thornberry family would also make a successful journey to the big screen.

Another popular show had its genesis in 1998, although it wouldn't become a regular series until three years later. *The Fairly OddParents* features a bored young kid, Timmy Turner, who wishes for more excitement out of life. Behold, Timmy's wish is granted when his fairy godparents, Cosmo and Wanda, arrive on the scene. "Be careful what you wish for—you might get it" is an old adage that Timmy usually ends up learning the hard way. This show originated as a recurring segment of Nick's *Oh Yeah! Cartoons* showcase. In addition to the regular voice cast, the show has featured a cavalcade of veteran comedy and voice actors like Grey DeLisle, Alec Baldwin, Dana Carvey, Gilbert Gottfried, Tom Kenny, Laraine Newman, and Rob Paulsen in supporting roles. Jay Leno frequently appeared as Timmy's superhero comic book idol, The Crimson Chin.

Timmy's tendency to make unwise wishes and his godparent's inability to grant them in a competent manner made for hilarity, not to mention a very popular show. *The Fairly OddParents* featured fast action, rapid-fire dialogue, hip in-jokes, and broad humor; Cosmo and Wanda were rather like a hip, snappier version of George Burns and Gracie Allen. It was a change of pace for Nick, but kids loved it enough to make it Nickelodeon's third longest-running series.

NICK-NACK NO. 809

It was often difficult to tell who needed the most help: OddParents Cosmo and Wanda, or their young charge Timmy!

Fairly
ODD
PARENTS

NO IDEA WAS TOO FAR OU
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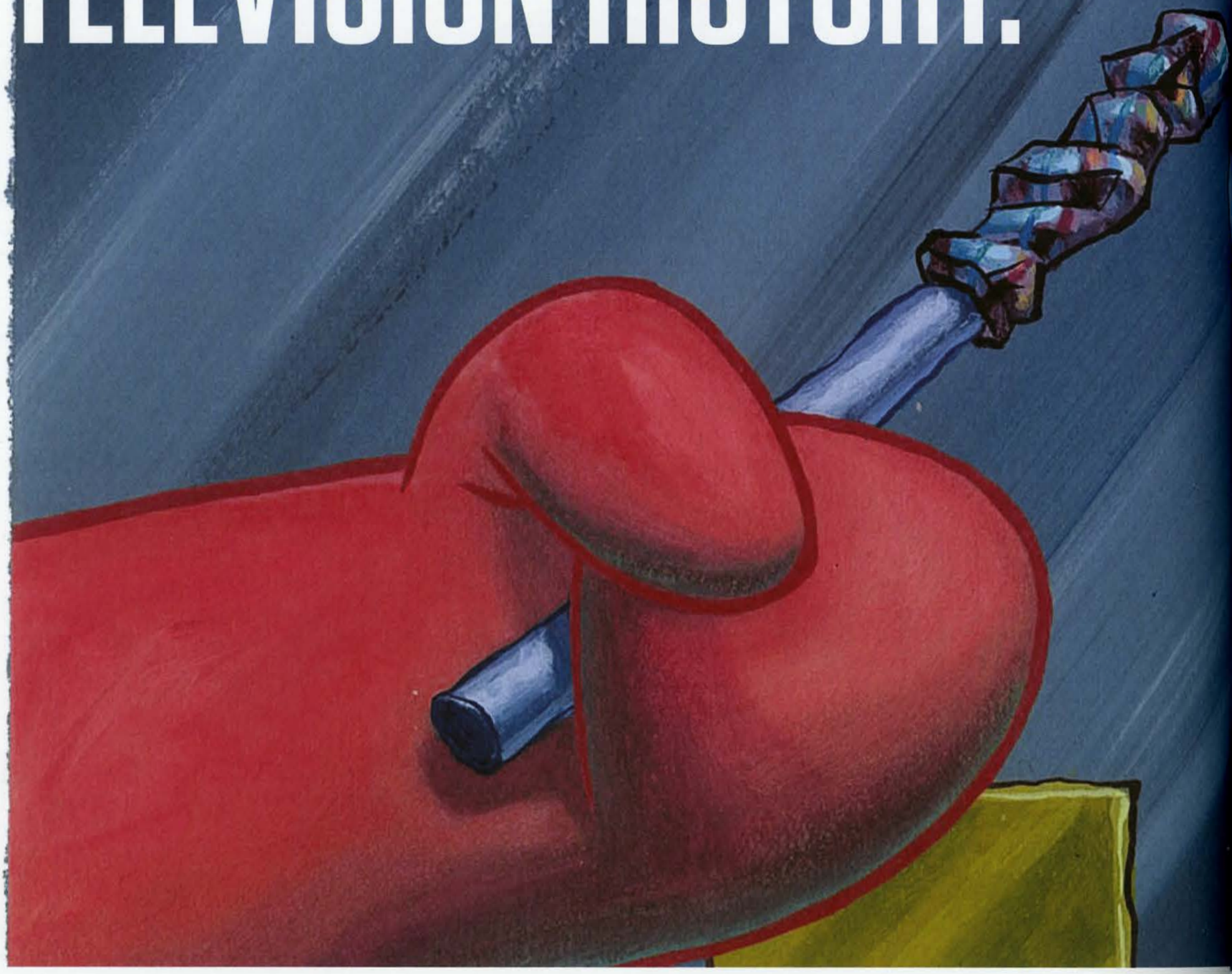

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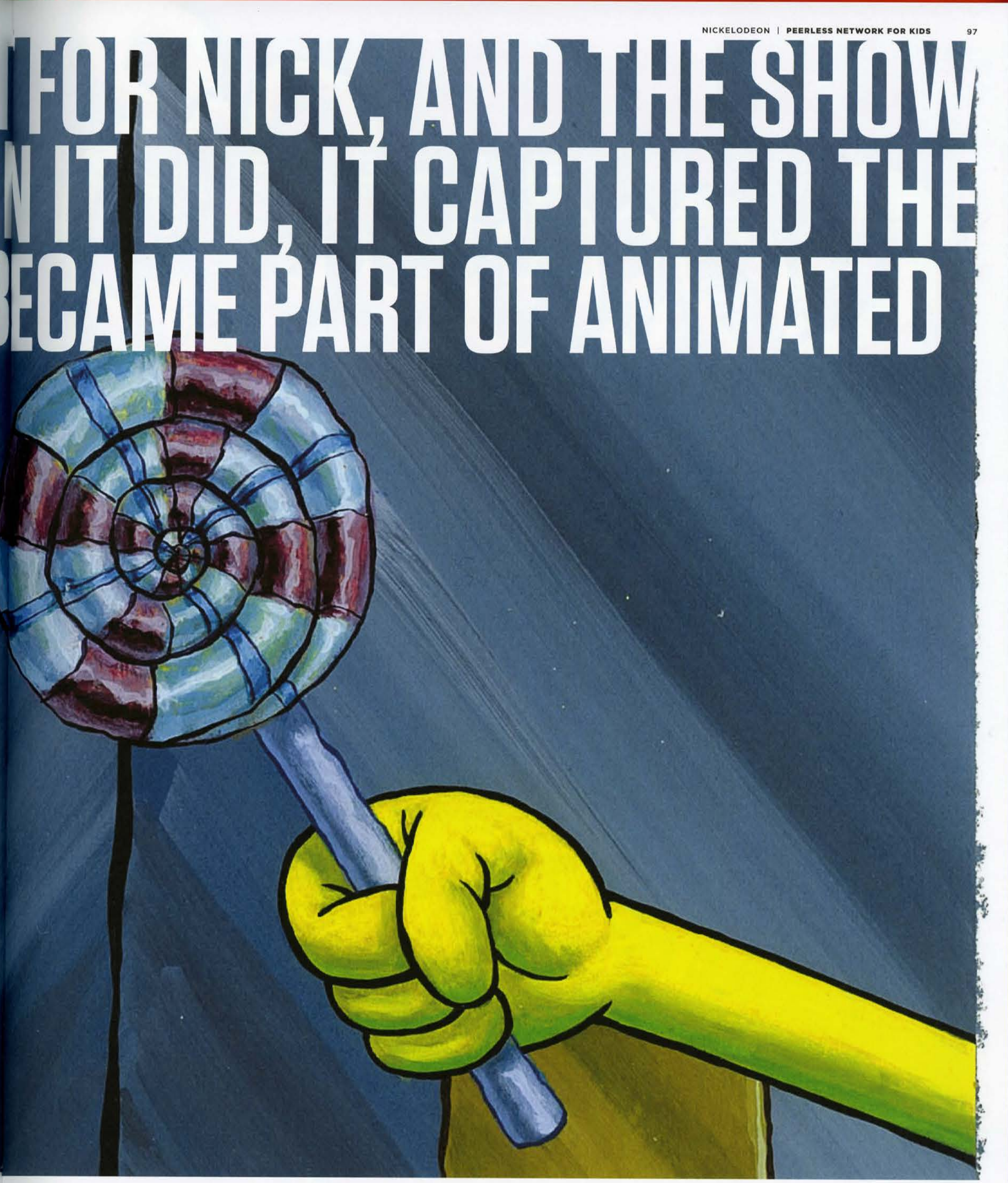
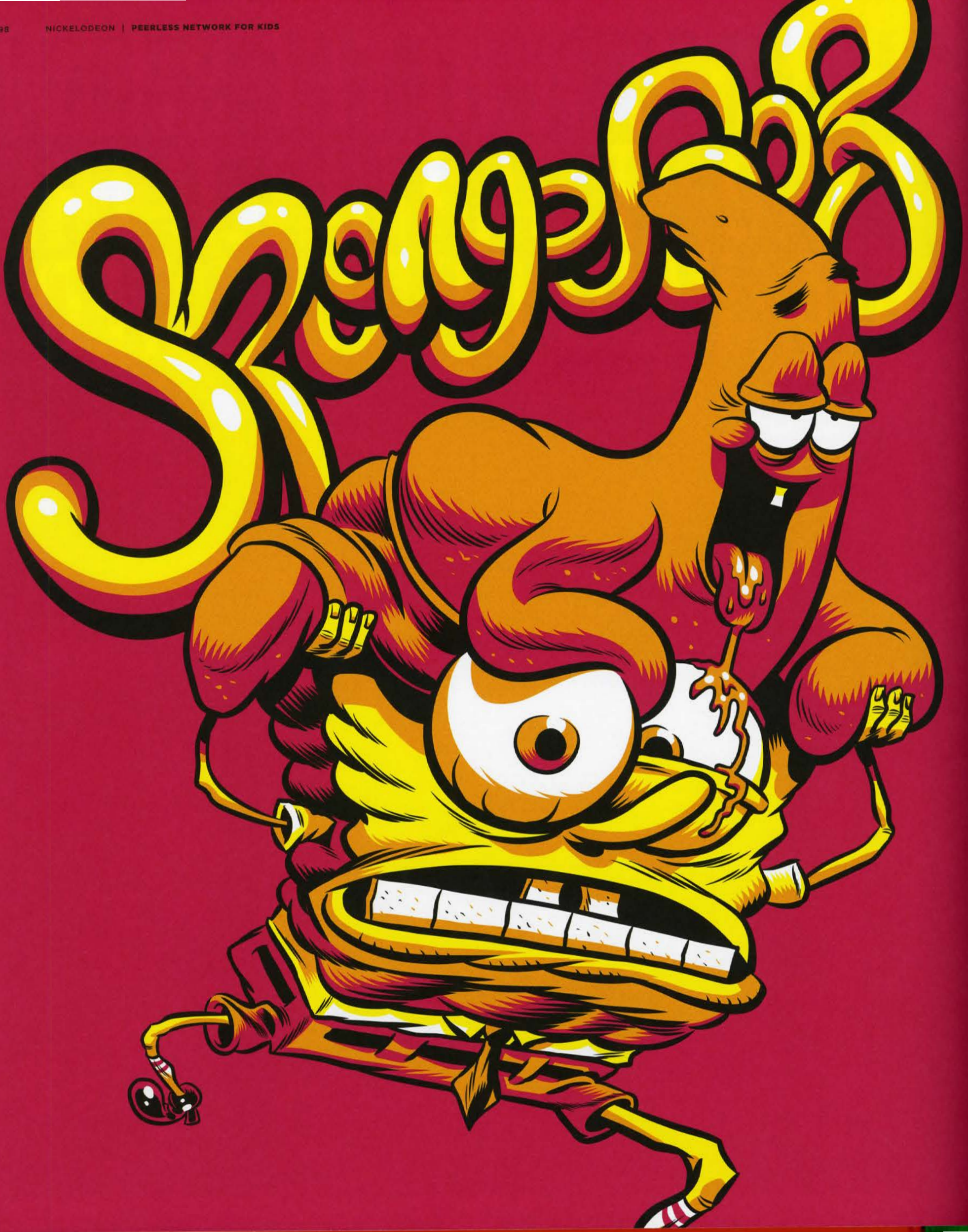



SpongeBob

SPONGEBOB SQUAREPANTS WENT FROM CARTOON SHOW TO NATIONAL PHENOMENON, ENTERING THE LARGER CULTURE IN A BIG WAY.

Mickey Mouse. Bugs Bunny. Popeye the Sailor. Felix the Cat. Every once in a very great while, a phenomenal star rises in the world of animation, rewriting history while gaining enormous popularity and countless fans. The next great star belonged to Nickelodeon in the guise of a childlike yellow sponge. Artist Steve Hillenburg came up with the idea for *SpongeBob SquarePants* based on his experiences as a former marine biology major. No idea was too far out for Nick, and the show hit the air in 1999. When it did, it captured the hearts of millions and became part of animated television history.

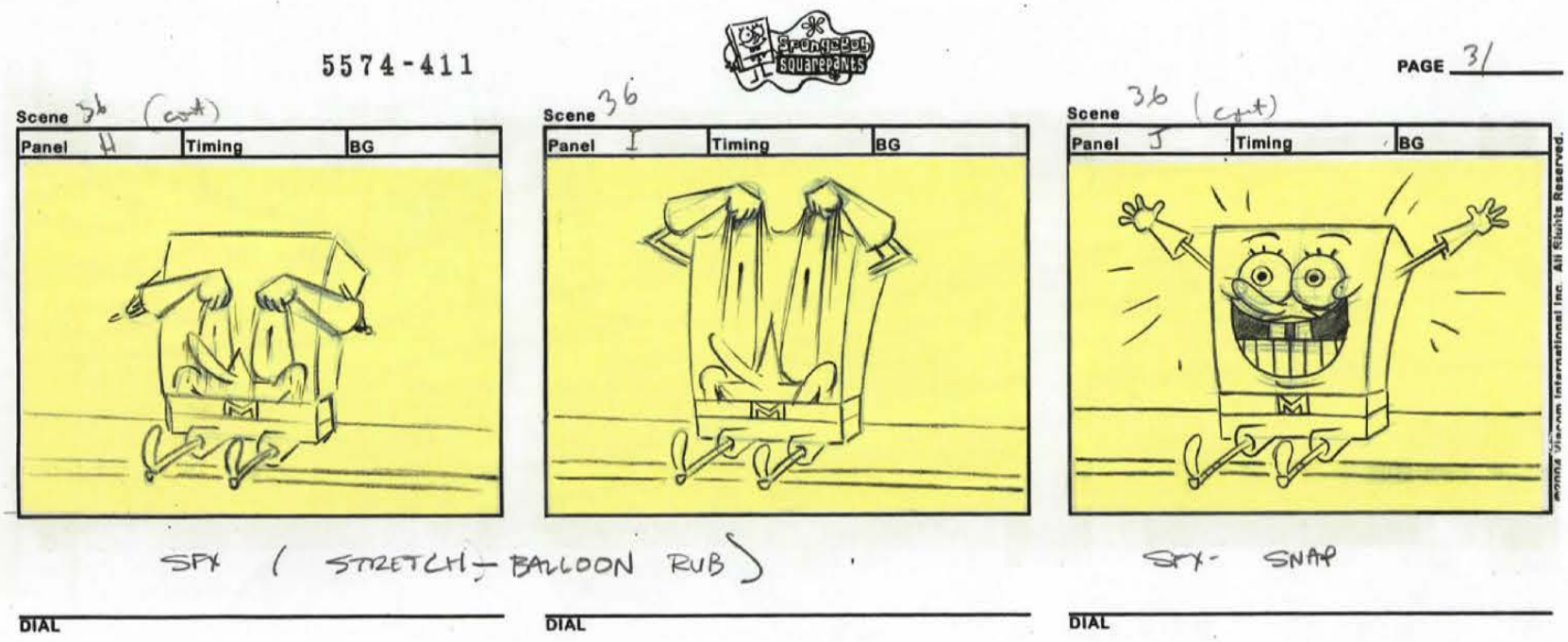
Legions of fans flocked to Bikini Bottom to enjoy the antics of ever-cheerful and optimistic SpongeBob. His dimwitted friend Patrick (a starfish) and his karate-loving companion Sandy Cheeks (a Texan squirrel in a diving suit) join the oddball fun as they antagonize neighbor Squidward (an octopus), chase jellyfish, and get involved in all sorts of brilliantly-scripted adventures. A superb voice cast headed by Tom Kenny added to the hilarity. Whether SpongeBob worked at his fast-food job at the Krusty Krab (under the penny-pinching eye of boss Eugene Krabs), faced off against evil adversary Plankton, or failed thousands of driving tests, the viewing audience couldn't get enough of him.

SpongeBob SquarePants went from cartoon show to national phenomenon, entering the larger culture in a big way—from the sing-along exuberance of its theme song, to the weird but thoroughly understandable "Opposites Day," to Patrick's lovable stupidity (and Squidward's sharply funny cynicism and asides). Before long it supplanted Nickelodeon's own *Rugrats* as the top-rated kids' show on cable television. The show generated a bonanza of merchandising, universal acclaim, and a hit movie in 2004.

Kids were not the only audience to enjoy SpongeBob's humor. College students flocked to the happy sponge and his entourage the way they did to Ren and Stimpy nine years previously. Parents found themselves sitting next to their kids and laughing along with them.

NICK-NACK NO. 181

Who lives in a pineapple under the sea? It's Nick's greatest animated star and the toast of Bikini Bottom, SpongeBob SquarePants!



Although countless pundits have analyzed the sponge's appeal, the truth may be simpler. SpongeBob was representative of the people who created him and the network that brought him to America's households. The characters were young adult animals that easily crossed the line into childlike simplicity. SpongeBob and Squidward may hold jobs and Sandy Cheeks may be a scientific genius, but at any time in any episode the same characters could (and did!) slip into the sort of silliness only a kid can relish. And the characterizations, powered by the sophisticated mania of the writing, delivered the laughs across several demographics.

The sponge himself is a glorified kid performing for other kids, touching on their own experiences. Writer Sherm Cohen described SpongeBob's appeal perfectly. "He's utterly without guile," Cohen said. "There is not a mean bone in his body. He's all innocence and childlike exuberance." Fellow writer C.H. Greenblatt added, "His scale of what is horribly wrong is different than ours. It's more like a kid's, so having what might seem like a minor inconvenience to you and me might be traumatic for him."

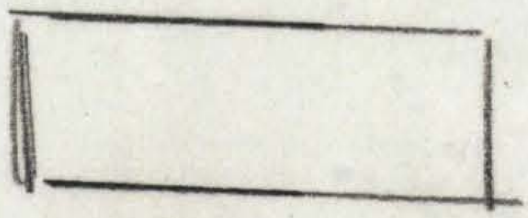
Doesn't that describe the biggest part of growing up? *SpongeBob SquarePants* brought Nickelodeon's third era full circle. The show's massive appeal reflected the same values Nickelodeon always touted: Be in touch with how the world feels to a kid.

In many ways, this era marked the rise of Nickelodeon to heights unforeseen only a few years before. According to author/journalist Norma Pecora, by 1996 kids were tuning out much of the programming aimed at them; ABC, NBC, and CBS were down 20 percent from the previous year. The WB had lost 26 percent of its young audience, and Fox nine percent. During the same period, Nick's Saturday morning ratings grew by nearly 24 percent.

NICK-NACK NO. 619

Not everyone loved working at the Krusty Krab restaurant as much as SpongeBob did. Poor Squidward would rather be painting masterpieces.

© S. Hillenburg '96

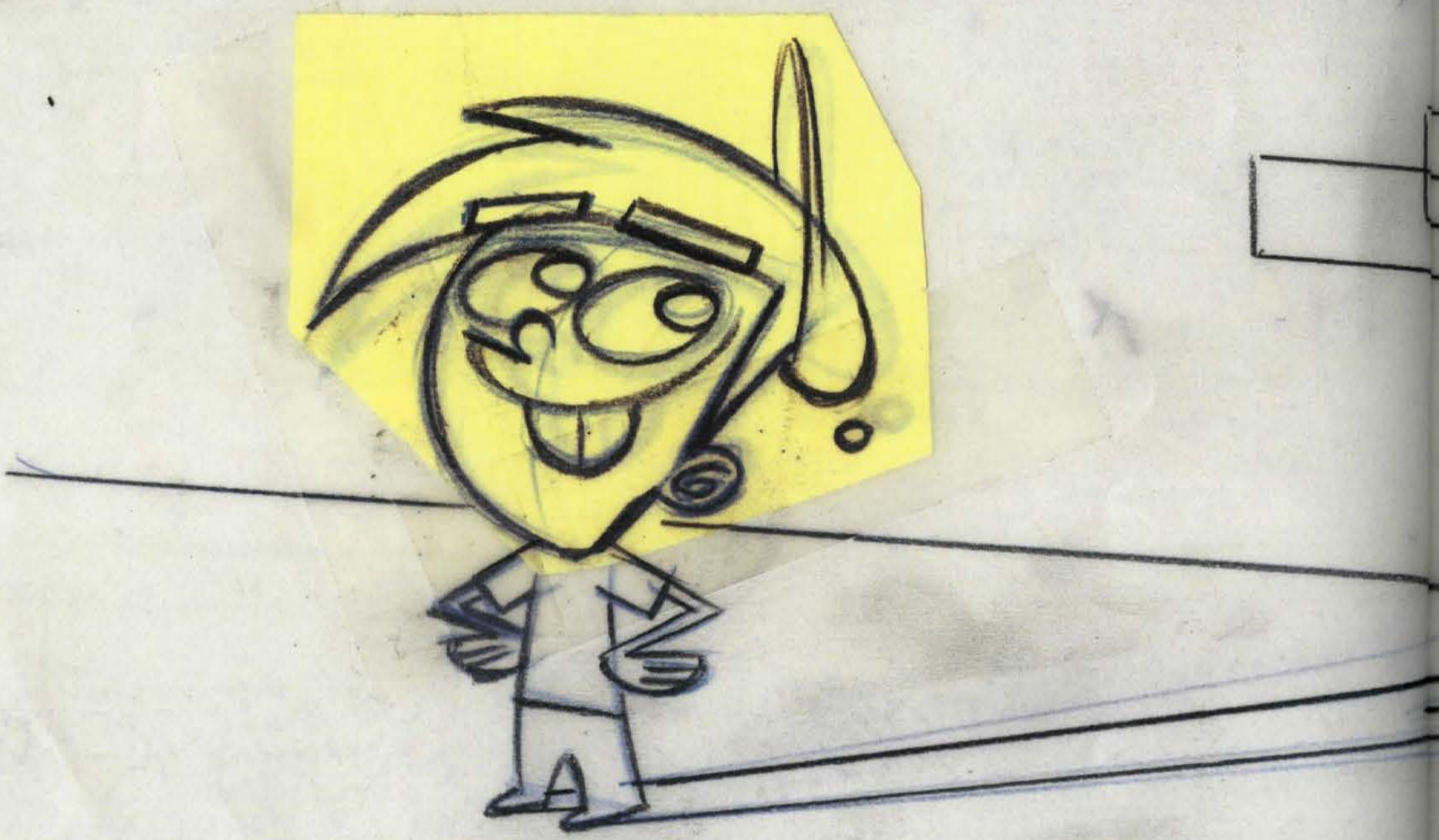


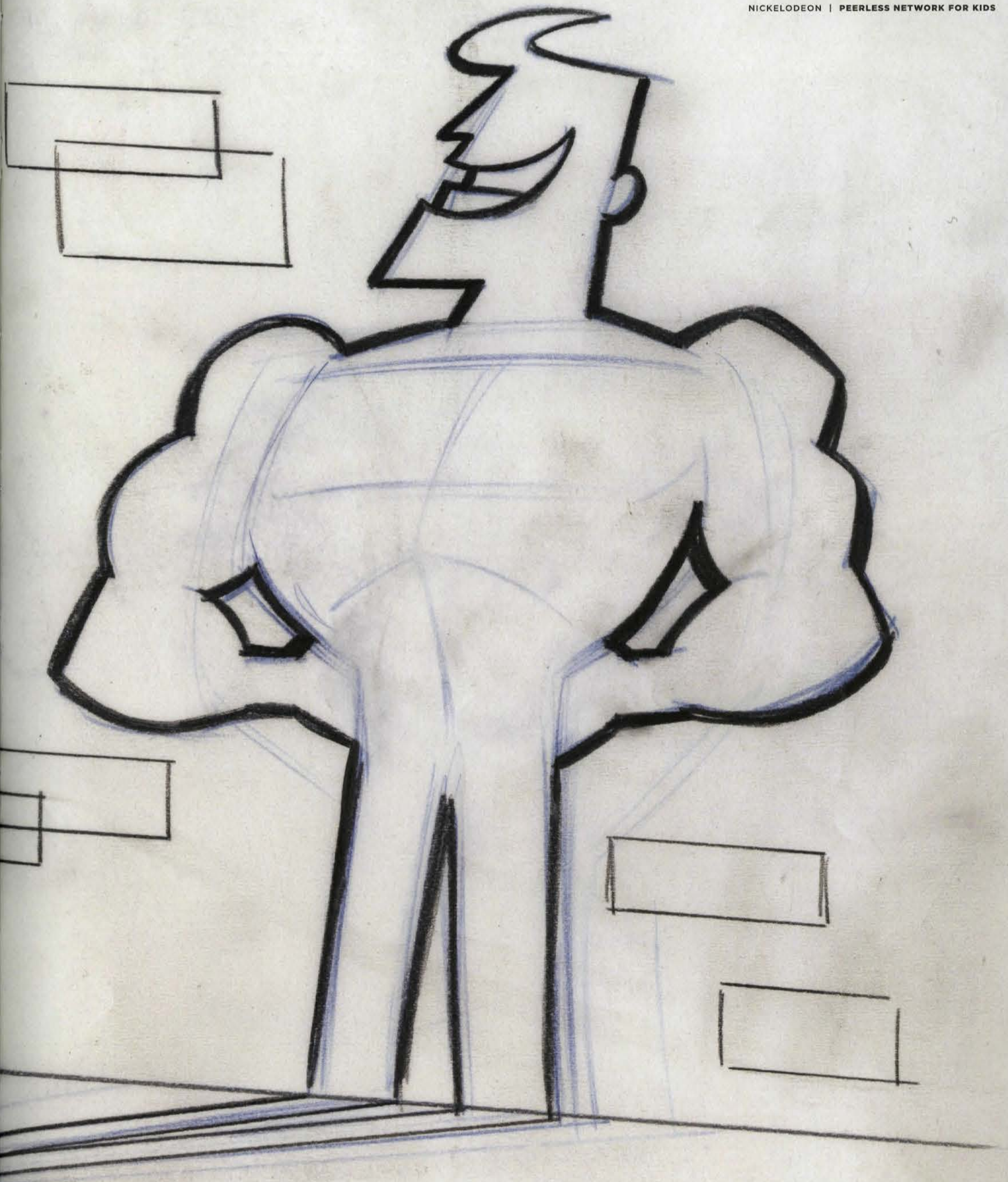
The network had now become a mainstay in a growing number of American households. As professor of media studies Kevin Sandler put it, "By the early 1990s, the 'Nick' experience, a family-friendly wholesomeness once the sole province of Disney, rivaled the Mousehouse as a worldwide brand that kids loved and parents trusted."

There was really no magic formula, master corporate plan, or "secret weapon" needed. Nickelodeon prospered by the same rules the network had always followed: Put kids first, hire creative personnel who related to them, and keep programming fresh and original. Although cable networks were now an established feature of American entertainment, very few of them grasped the power of playing to a unique demographic the way Nickelodeon did. As this era in Nick's history ended, the network was poised to go on to even greater successes.

NICK-NACK NO. 971

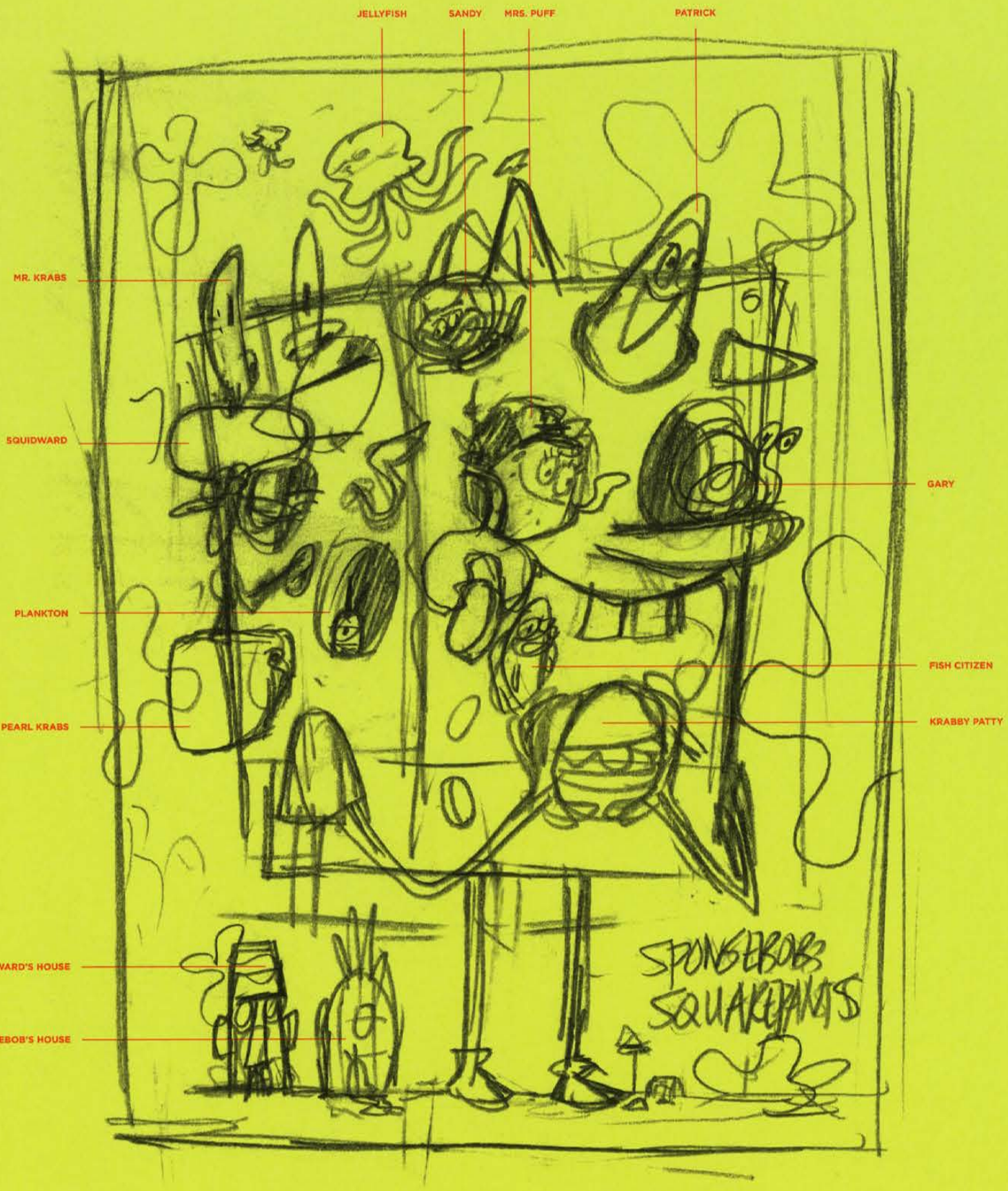
"Be careful what you wish for." Good advice on this show: If Cosmo and Wanda didn't mess up, count on Timmy.





BY THE EARLY NINETIES, THE "NICK" EXPERIENCE—A FAMILY FRIENDLY WHOLESOMENESS ONCE THE SOLE PROVINCE OF DISNEY—RIVALED THE MOUSEHOUSE AS A WORLDWIDE BRAND THAT KIDS LOVED AND PARENTS TRUSTED.

KEVIN SANDLER / PROFESSOR OF MEDIA STUDIES



NICK-NACK NO. 863

SpongeBob is yet another of Nick's movie stars. His two theatrical features were huge box office hits.

NEW WORLDS TO EXPLORE

ERA

4

PAGES 106–139

NICK-NACK NO. 011

¡Mira usted! It's the unbeatable masked wrestler Nacho! Nick's hilarious 1996 comedy was actually based on a true story about a Catholic priest who wrestled in order to keep his orphanage afloat.

FROM 2000–2005, IT SEEMED THAT EVERY CHANCE NICK TOOK PAID OFF; ITS FIRST HIT OF THE 2000S STILL REMAINS ONE OF THE LONGEST-RUNNING AND MOST POPULAR KIDS' SHOWS EVER PRODUCED.

At the beginning of the decade, Nickelodeon ruled the ratings and held the allegiance of millions of kids. With *Blue's Clues* and *SpongeBob SquarePants* scoring major hits, Nick was now synonymous with quality kids' programming. Any other network may have been hard-pressed for an encore, but the "kids only" attitude at Nick continued to produce one success after another. From 2000–2005, it seemed that every chance Nick took paid off; its first hit of the 2000s still remains one of the longest-running and most popular kids' shows ever produced.

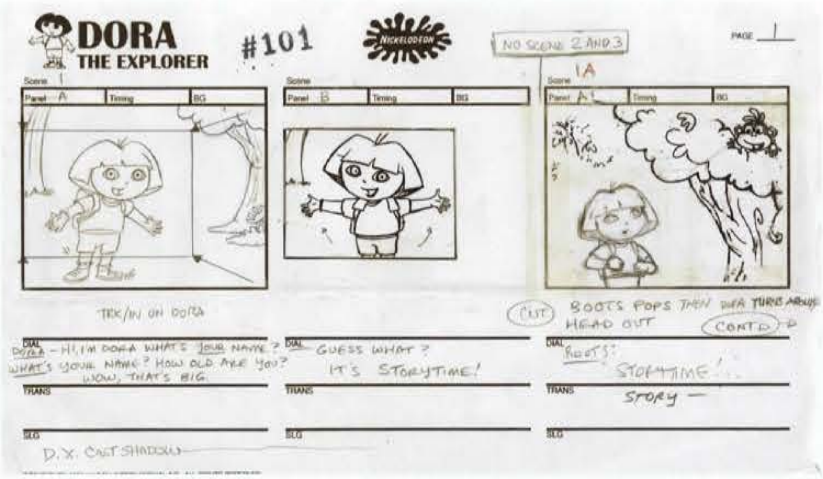
NICK-NACK NO. 797

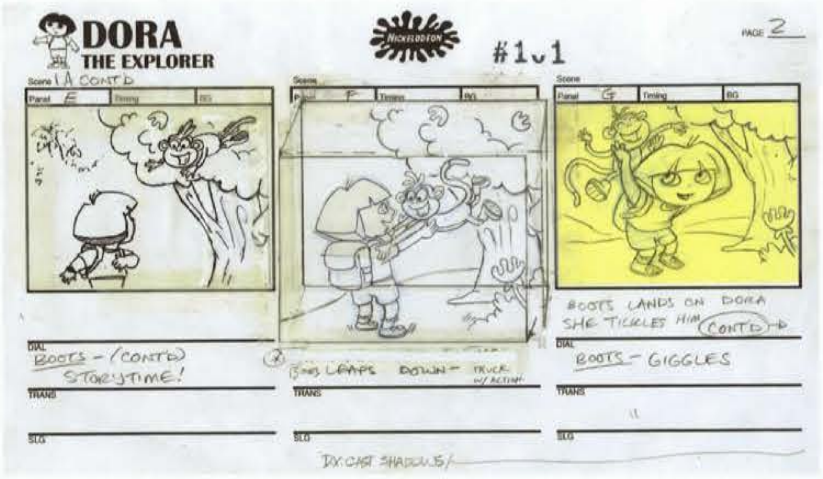
SpongeBob has always been fond of his buddies Patrick and Sandy, and even grumpy old Squidward. But his true love is a perfectly made Krabby Patty. The secret recipe is safe with him.

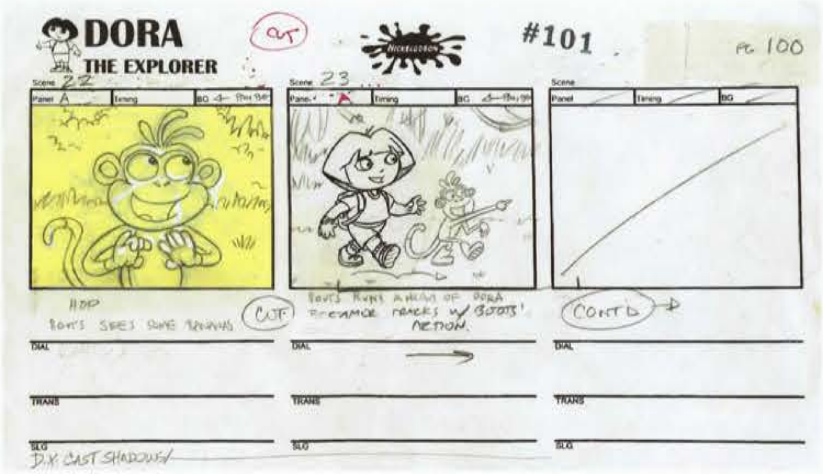
DORA THE EXPLORER
by TADC

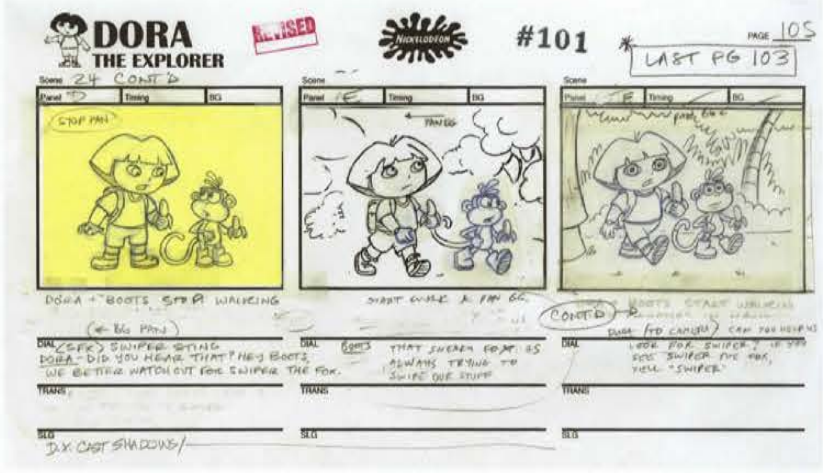
NICK-NACK NO. 251

Dora is one of Nick's best-loved characters. She was so popular that she became one of the only animated superstars (along with Pebbles Flintstone) to grow into a teenager for all-new adventures.









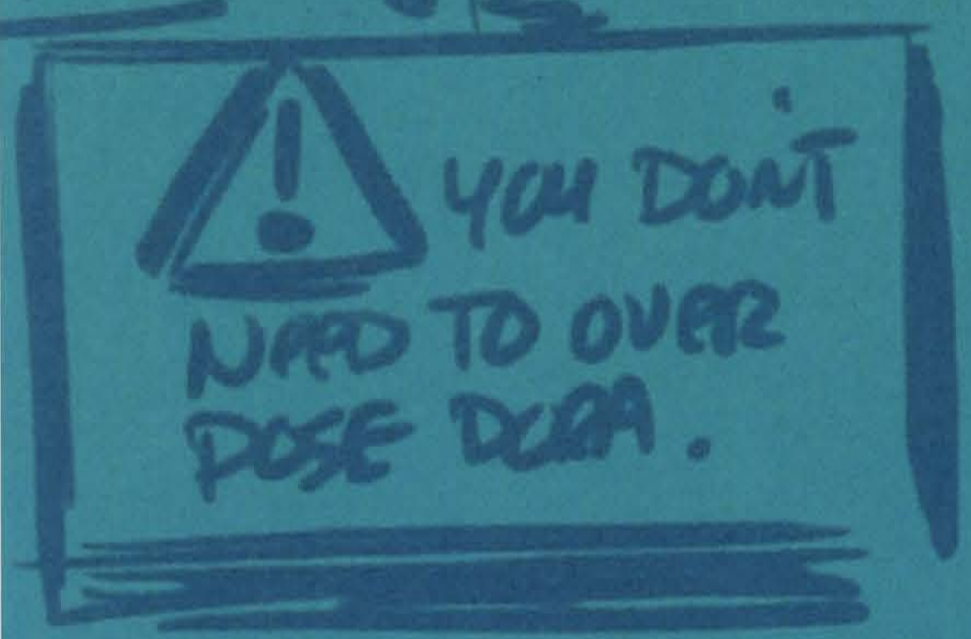
Chris Gifford, Valerie Walsh Valdes, and Eric Weiner were in charge of developing a show for preschoolers, and came up with the idea of a young girl named Tess who enjoyed adventures with her animal friends. Nick executives, however, had just returned from a conference where they learned that Latinos were television's most underrepresented minority. Nickelodeon had a strong reputation for making stars out of minority actors and promoting diversity, and was eager to build on those values.

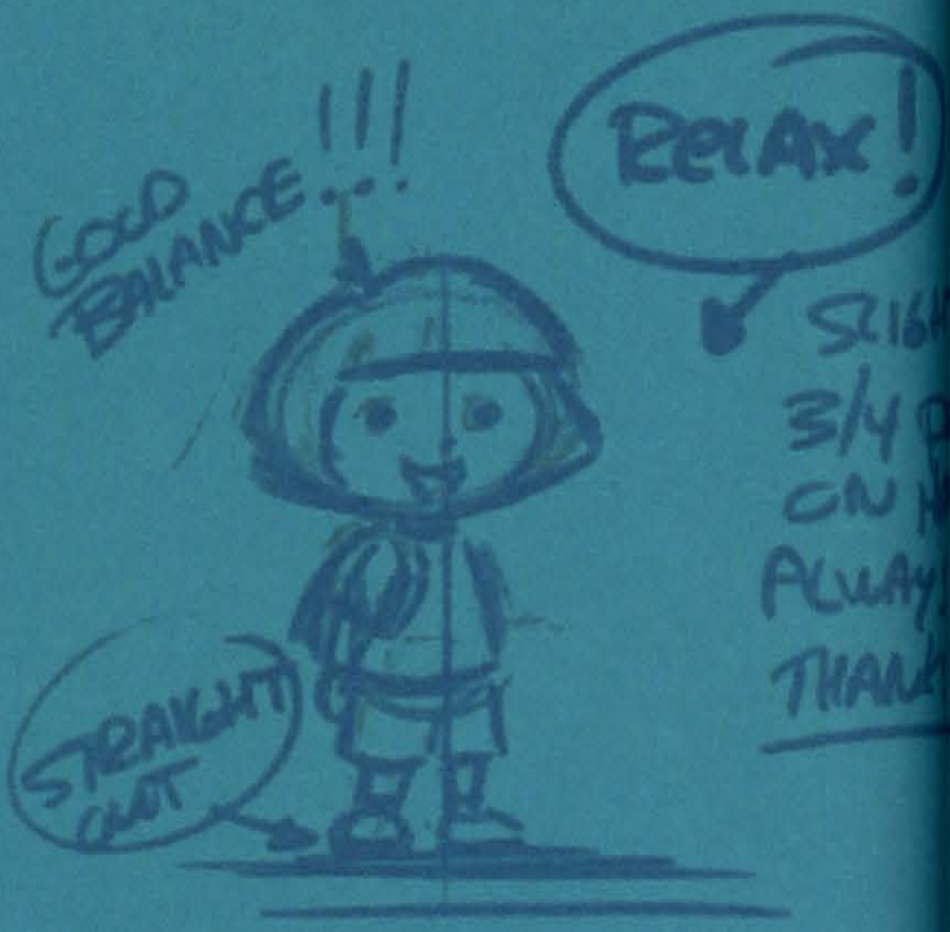
Tess was soon rechristened Dora Marquez (a.k.a. Dora the Explorer), a 7-year-old Latina girl with the ability to converse in both Spanish and English. "The idea was to make learning a second language appealing," explained Walsh Valdes. "We were trying to make [being bilingual] into a positive, something you should be proud of." Dora was an appealing, almond-eyed adventurer with a cute bowl-shaped haircut, and kids quickly found her irresistible.

Dora was given a monkey companion named Boots, a talking backpack (named, what else, Backpack, called to life along with its traveling companion, the Map), and Diego (a slightly older cousin) to share the fun with. Dora's adventures were educational as well as entertaining (she was, after all, an explorer), whether she was discovering facts about the world or outwitting the clever fox Swiper. Within a year, Nickelodeon had a wonderful new star, another highly regarded and highly rated show, and a secure place in the history of American cultural diversity.

It was through *Dora the Explorer* that many kids first became interested in learning another language or exploring other cultures. Although she was only a preschooler, Dora was a giant in bringing Nick's young audiences exciting new worlds to explore. She would go on to star in several series and a traveling stage show, and her merry smile graced a wide array of merchandise. Dora speaks directly to her audience, encourages them to sing, shout back at the screen and join the fun themselves. Dora was also a listener, and the kids were only happy to help her along on each episode's journey.

WITHIN A YEAR, NICKELO
NEW STAR AND A SECURE
AMERICAN CULTURAL DI



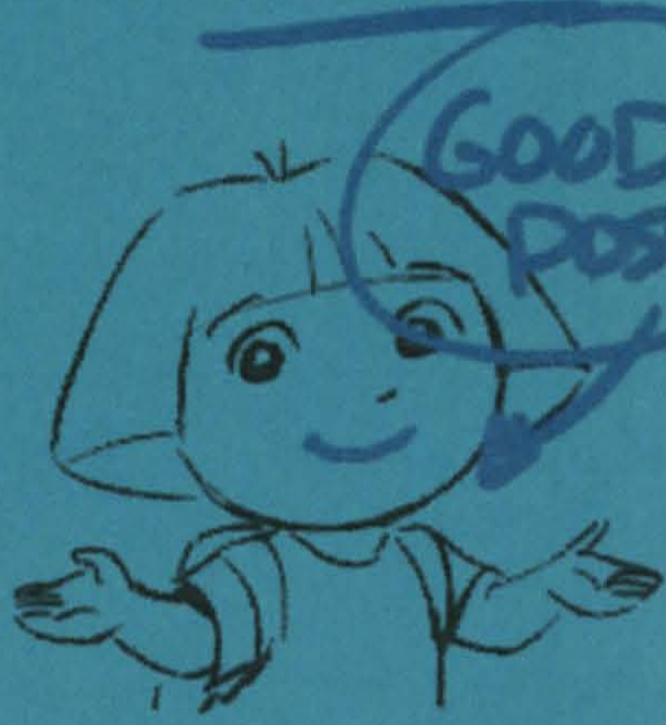


DEON HAD A WONDERFUL PLACE IN THE HISTORY OF VERSITY.

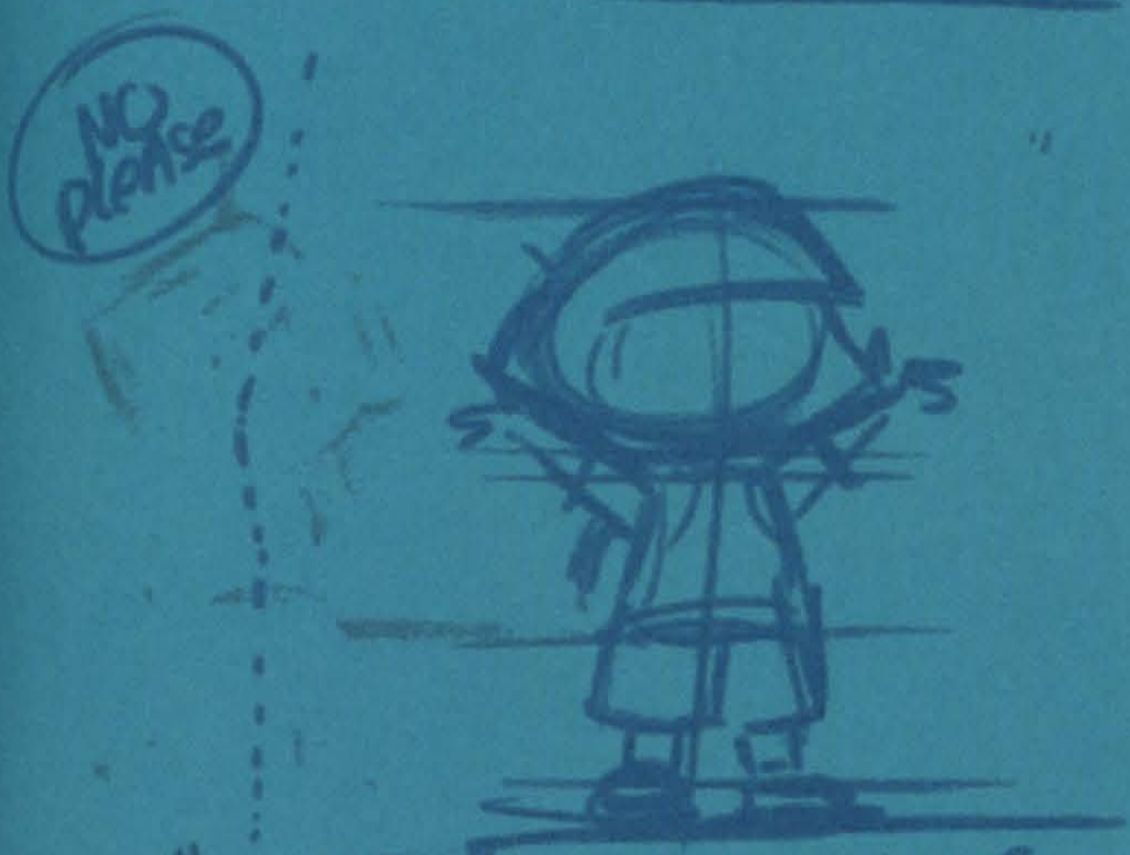
NOT DORA. THANKS.

IF YOU'RE GOING TO HIP DORA BACK + FORTH, THEN DO IT WITHOUT KNEES POINTING OUT.

DON'T PUT DORA'S HANDS OUT FROM HER SIDE. TOO "PRISSY". THANKS.



NO SMILES ON DORA. KEEP SMILE IN MIDDLE. THANKS!



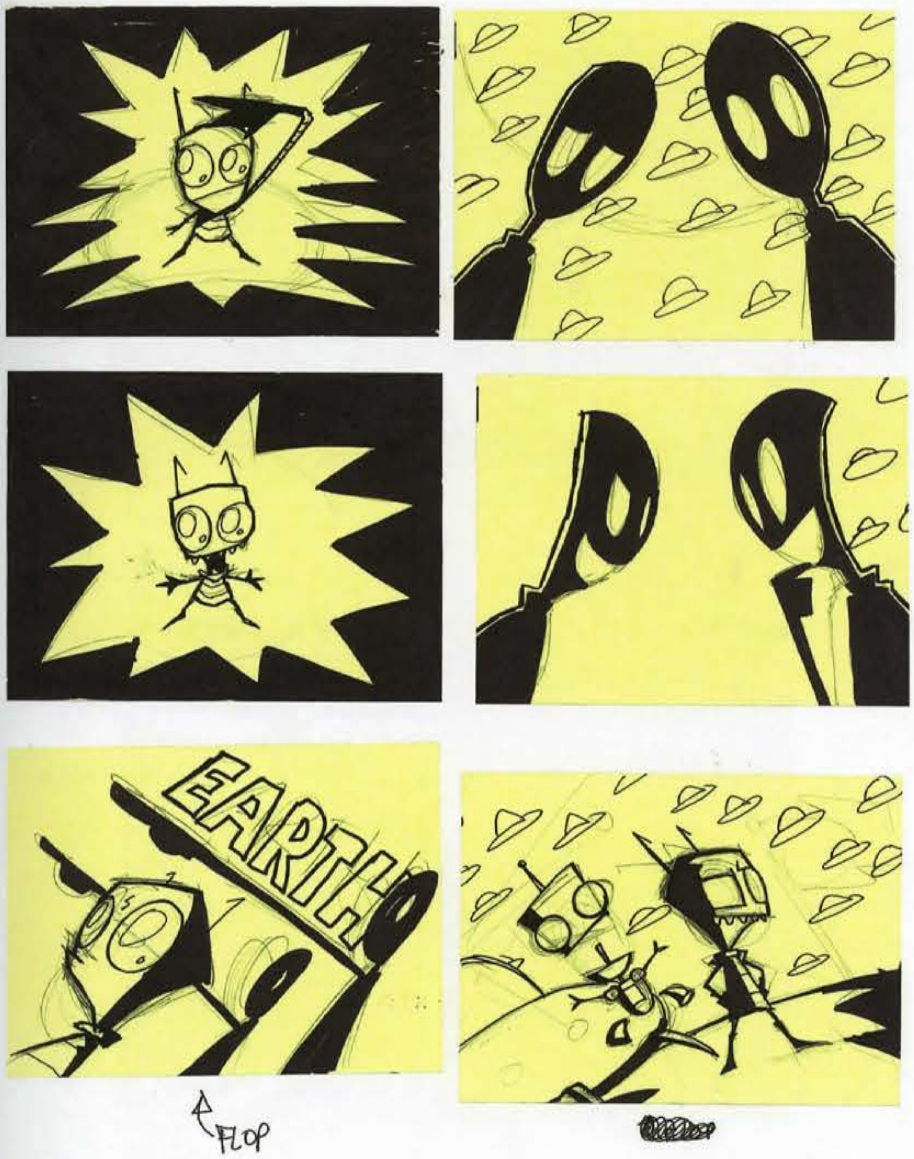
TOO "WONKY". WHERE IS LINE OF ACTION OF ACTION? DOES IT WORK.

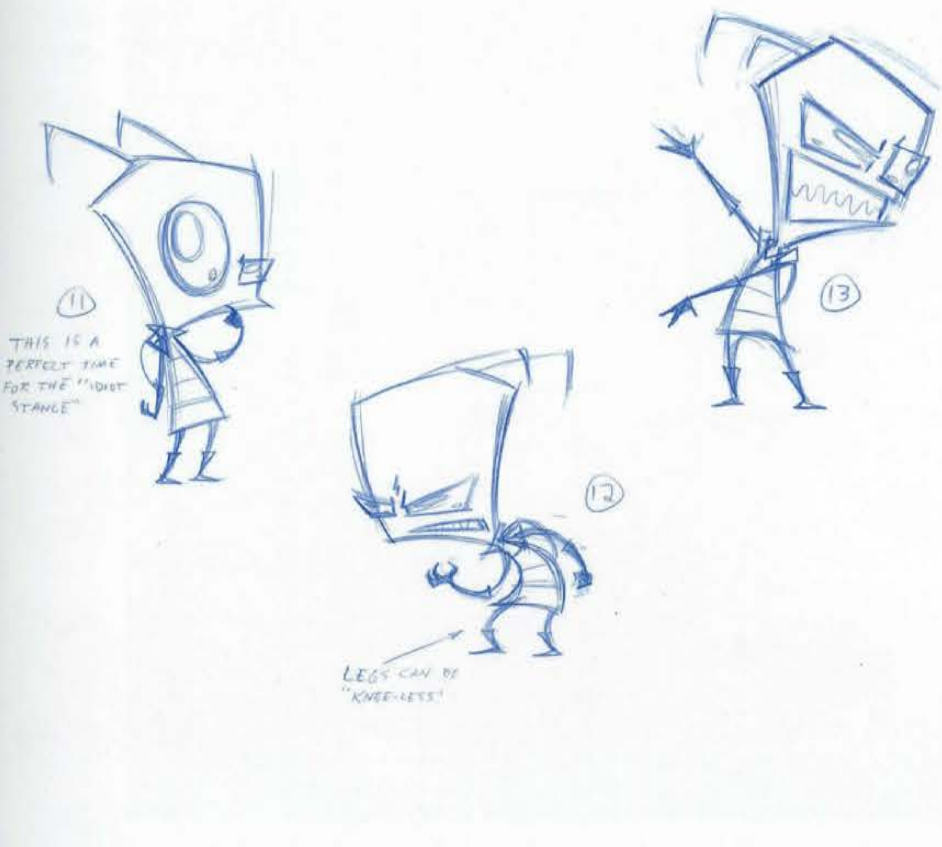
INVADER ZIM

27
EPISODES

NICK-NACK NO. 487

If feisty young alien Zim ever conquered the Earth, he'd be too incompetent to know what to do with it. Oh yes, he has a robot even less capable than he is. . .





While the youngest viewers were busy following Dora, Nick took a major chance the following year and produced one of the most unusual (if short-lived) animated shows of the decade. Nick executive Mary Harrington, always on the lookout for cutting-edge entertainment, saw the work of an underground cartoonist named Jhonen Vasquez. Vasquez' style was not for the squeamish; after all, one of his most successful comic series was called *Johnny the Homicidal Maniac*. Vasquez' mix of stark horror and bizarre humor was most evident in his comic book *SQUEE!*, the chronicle of the world's most phobic boy. It was *SQUEE!* that attracted Harrington to the possibility of having Jhonen Vasquez try his hand with Nick.

With no real experience as an animator or director, Vasquez pulled off one of the funniest, coolest, most distinctive-looking cartoons on any network. *Invader Zim* is the story of an inept alien from the planet Irken, a green pint-sized egomaniac who is determined to conquer the Earth for his superiors. Actually, they never tell Zim that the real purpose of the assignment is to exile him due to his utter incompetence. Equipped with a malfunctioning robot named GIR, Zim hatches one doomed, ridiculous plan after another while disguised as a human schoolboy.

Only his equally self-absorbed classroom rival, Dib, suspects the truth about Zim, and their ongoing battles form the core of many stories. Vasquez managed to infuse his angular, colorfully animated characters with surprising personality. The word soon spread about this novel show, and Nick once again had a cult hit on its hands. *Invader Zim* was a special collaboration between an imaginative artist and a network that sought out creativity, no matter where it might flourish.

No one could call Nickelodeon's next series a cult favorite. *The Adventures of Jimmy Neutron: Boy Genius* made its debut in 2001 and rapidly became a nationwide hit. Until then Nick's showcase series had been animated by traditional methods, but *Jimmy Neutron* broke ground by becoming the network's first series presented entirely through computer-generated animation. CGI at the time was generally expensive and confined mostly to big-screen Hollywood productions, but Nick astutely saw that it was becoming the preferred medium for kids growing up with increasingly sophisticated games and movies. Nickelodeon president of film and TV entertainment Albie Hecht was wowed by the new look. "It really just blew us away," he recalled. "The animation was so sparkling, and it had that 'future-retro' style."

Jimmy Neutron (created by John A. Davis) blends science fiction and adventure stories starring an incredibly intelligent 11 year old. Jimmy's imagination leads him to create all sorts of wild inventions (like his robot dog, Goddard, voiced by the legendary Frank Welker). Unfortunately, many of them somehow end up causing more mayhem than good for Jimmy's hometown of Retroville. The series features many of the elements beloved and familiar to kids who watch Nickelodeon: the oddball protagonist with an unusual set of talents, clueless parents, best friends to share adventures with, and off-kilter stories that surprise as much as they amuse.

With his long, upswept cowlick and optimistic attitude, Jimmy (voiced by Debi Derryberry) is a kid who loves science rather than being a "kid scientist," and this makes him accessible and friendly rather than simply eccentric. In short, Jimmy Neutron is someone a kid would want as a friend. Jimmy's two "main men" are asthmatic worrywart Carl Weezer (the versatile Rob Paulsen), and Sheen Estevez (Jeffrey Garcia), whose obsession with the superhero Ultra Lord is second only to his manic hyperactivity.

Of special interest, however, is the equally brilliant Cindy Vortex (Carolyn Lawrence, the voice of *SpongeBob*'s Sandy Cheeks), a girl genius in ponytails who has never completely forgiven Jimmy for usurping the title of "Smartest Person in Retroville." Any hard feelings, though, are countered by the fact that Cindy has something of a crush on Jimmy. Sometimes Jimmy's rival, sometimes his love interest, Cindy Vortex adds even more depth to a great cartoon show. Jimmy Neutron sometimes crossed over for far-out adventures with Timmy Turner from *The Fairly OddParents*. When they get together, it's Timmy who is animated in CGI while Jimmy Neutron is animated in 2D!

NICK-NACK NO. 199

Give this boy genius a rock, some twine, and duct tape, and he'll get to Mars with it. Nobody in the Nick universe has more fun with—or trouble from—scientific adventure than Jimmy Neutron.

JIMMY NEUTRON
JAMES ISAAC NEUTRON, BOY GENIUS

Drake & Josh

Nickelodeon did not ignore its commitment to memorable live-action series during this era. *Drake & Josh* was Nick's version of *The Odd Couple*. Nick went back to the winning formula of casting young actors who starred in former productions; both Drake Bell and Josh Peck were graduates of *The Amanda Show*. Like Kenan Thompson and Kel Mitchell before them, Bell and Peck were now the stars of a popular teen sitcom. The show was the brainchild of Dan Schneider (who would go on to further success with *Zoey 101*, *iCarly*, *Victorious*, and *Sam & Cat*).

Thrown together as stepbrothers, Drake and Josh could not be more opposite in demeanor. Drake Parker is a popular, aspiring rock star who has a way with the young ladies. Josh Nichols, on the other hand, is a classic nerd who couldn't buy a date. Making life even tougher is their sly, conniving younger sister Megan, fiendishly portrayed by Miranda Cosgrove. Beginning in 2004, Drake and Josh participated in various misadventures fueled by their contrasting personalities.

Many other episodes, however, honestly explored issues centered on surviving the social scene at school, the complexities of dating, and the ever-important issue of what popularity meant to kids. What made *Drake & Josh* special, however, was its overarching storyline highlighting change, growth, and maturity. Nickelodeon knew that these themes especially resonated with same-age viewers who were undergoing parallel experiences as the show's characters. Drake eventually lost much of his childish conceit and learned to care. Josh grew into a more socially adept, less alienated young man.

Teen viewers loved the show. *Drake & Josh* spawned a fan fiction website that collected over a thousand stories written by young aficionados. The show received acclaim in other areas as well. Reviewer Laura Fries of *Variety* remarked that "Dan Schneider hasn't forgotten what it's like to be a kid, and his TV progeny Drake and Josh embody the goofy, unabashed fun that too few remember and even fewer get to revel in today." Nickelodeon had yet another hit.

DRAKE & JOSH WAS NICK'S VERSION OF THE ODD COUPLE.

NICK-NACK NO. 991

Nick's connection to its audience was never more evident than in this poignant sitcom about two stepbrothers who start out as opposites but change and mature over the course of the series.

NICKELODEON
JIMMY NEUTRON
BOY GENIUS
Original Motion Picture Soundtrack
AARON CARTER
*NSYNC
BRITNEY SPEARS
PARAMOUNT PICTURES AND NICKELODEON MOVIES PRESENT AN O ENTERTAINMENT AND NICKELODEON PRODUCTION "JIMMY NEUTRON: BOY GENIUS"
JOHN DEBNEY
JEFF CARSON AND FRANKIE PINE
GINA SHAY
JULIA PISTOR KEITH ALCORN
JOHN A. DAVIS AND STEVE OEDEKERK
JOHN A. DAVIS AND DAVID N. WEISS & J. DAVID STEM AND STEVE OEDEKERK
STEVE OEDEKERK JOHN A. DAVIS AND ALBIE HECHT
JOHN A. DAVIS
G GENERAL AUDIENCES
All Ages Admitted
IN THEATRES THIS CHRISTMAS
www.jimmyneutron.com

THEIR SPACE TRAVEL IS CONCEIVED BY THE FILMMAKERS IN A WAY THAT IS NOT ONLY CHARMING BUT KIND OF LOVELY.

ROGER EBERT / MOVIE CRITIC

Nickelodeon did not forget its dedication to bringing quality feature-length films to fans of their TV shows. The first to get the big-screen treatment during this era was none other than Jimmy Neutron. *Jimmy Neutron: Boy Genius* hit the theaters in 2001 to overwhelmingly favorable reviews.

Jimmy Neutron: Boy Genius is a cosmic adventure that takes place after aliens abduct every adult in Retroville, including Jimmy's parents. At first, the town's kids, having no rules to obey, celebrate with junk food binges. It soon sinks in, however, that not having adults around doesn't result in the paradise they envisioned. It is up to Jimmy and his faithful friends to improvise starships, mount a rescue effort, and confront the aliens on their home planet. Oh—and be back the same day for dinner.

The fact that the film's CGI was not as advanced as that of the larger studios did not detract from its charm and sparkle. The movie received a big thumbs-up from premier movie critic Roger Ebert, who appreciated the imagination that went into *Jimmy Neutron*. "Their space travel is conceived by the filmmakers in a way that is not only charming but kind of lovely," Ebert said in his review. "Jimmy converts some of the rides in an amusement park into spaceships, and we see a Ferris wheel, an octopus ride and a merry-go-round journeying across the field of stars."

A.O. Scott of the *The New York Times* wrote that it had "the bright Rube Goldberg energy of one of Jimmy's contraptions, and it resists the common kid-movie tendency to lecture its young audience about individuality, self-esteem or other stuff they hear enough about in school." *Jimmy Neutron: Boy Genius* made $81 million at the domestic box office, nearly three times its budget, with healthy worldwide receipts—more proof that Nick was for kids, whether parked on couches or in theater seats.

Nick went outside established properties for the next feature film, *Lemony Snicket's A Series of Unfortunate Events.* Daniel Handler's Lemony Snicket books are dark comedies in which children endure terrifying ordeals at the hands of bizarre adults ... and kids love them. Nickelodeon had already produced the weird, scary series, *Are You Afraid of the Dark?* and appreciated that sometimes kids enjoyed getting the shivers. The network opted for the property and the film came out in 2004.

Unfortunate Events is actually a combination of the first three Lemony Snicket novels. Screenwriter Robert Gordon knitted the spooky tales together, and Brad Silberman directed. The plot concerns three orphans whose parents die in a mysterious fire. From there they are herded from one creepy relative to another, none of them worse than Count Olaf, who ends up treating the children like slaves. The movie does have a happy ending, but not before a slew of ... well, *unfortunate* events.

Unlike many of the other Nickelodeon movies, this film cast actors who had not appeared in Nick TV series. But what a stellar lineup. Besides casting the mercurial Jim Carrey as the avaricious Count Olaf, the movie featured Meryl Streep as weird Aunt Josephine, Catherine O'Hara, Dustin Hoffman, Helena Bonham Carter, Cedric the Entertainer, and Jude Law (as the narrator). Gilbert Gottfried was enlisted as the voice of a talking duck.

Nickelodeon, of course, needed three child actors for the kids in the audience to root for, and they made excellent finds in Australian actress Violet Baudelaire and Liam Aiken (once considered for the screen role of Harry Potter). Kara and Shelby Hoffman both portrayed baby sister Sunny. *Unfortunate Events* turned out to be a critical success that went on to earn over $200 million worldwide. Robert K. Elder of the *Chicago Tribune* found the film "exceptionally clever, hilariously gloomy and bitingly subversive."

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LEMONY SNICKET'S
A SERIES OF
UNFORTUNATE
EVENTS™

NICK-NACK NO. 067

Nick's dark and loopy 2004 hit film was anything but a series of unfortunate events. Favorable reviews and worldwide box office of $209 million spelled yet another triumph for Nickelodeon Movies.

NICK-NACK NO. 647

Jim Carrey's star power and Brad Silberling's direction were a can't-miss combination for Nick. Add over 500 visual effects shots by Industrial Light & Magic, and the recipe for a hit movie was complete.

THE SPONGEBOB SQUAREPANTS MOVIE PROVES THAT IT'S POSSIBLE TO GO FROM COZY TV SERIES TO THE MUCH MORE DEMANDING EXPANSE OF THE BIG SCREEN.

MICHAEL RECHTSHAFFEN / MOVIE CRITIC

Nickelodeon was just warming up. In 2004, Nick brought its greatest star to the big screen in one of the wildest animated films ever made. Before the year ended, millions of people around the world lined up to laugh along with Hollywood's hottest new star: SpongeBob SquarePants. The plans were laid early in 2002. Nickelodeon went in-house for the movie, hiring creator Steve Hillenburg as director and using five of the show's writers to develop the script. They finished it in a mere three months. The entire *SpongeBob* voice cast reprised their roles as well. The result was yet another hit movie, proving that Nickelodeon gave people—especially kids—what they most wanted to see.

In *The SpongeBob SquarePants Movie* (with the tagline "Bigger. Better. More absorbent."), Bikini Bottom is home to yet another variation on the infamous fast-food rivalry between SpongeBob's stingy boss Mr. Krabs and the evil genius Plankton. This time the dirty tricks have gone too far: Plankton frames Krabs for the theft of King Neptune's crown. The furious monarch is about to do away with Krabs but SpongeBob and Patrick bravely offer to retrieve the crown in exchange for Krabs' life. Intervening on their behalf is King Neptune's kindly daughter, Mindy Mermaid (Scarlett Johansson).

The king agrees to the quest under the conditions of a six-day deadline, and the boys set forth. In their absence, Plankton conquers the city using mind-control buckets. He also sends a rowdy hitman named Dennis (Alec Baldwin) after SpongeBob and Patrick to ensure their doom. Our heroes traverse an impassible trench thanks to Mindy, and survive capture by a deep-sea diver who temporarily adds SpongeBob and Patrick to his collection.

The crown is secured, but the boys lose their way back to Bikini Bottom. The day is saved by the timely live-action appearance of actor David Hasselhoff, who power-strokes SpongeBob and Patrick home riding his mighty trapezii. The crown is returned, Plankton is crushed, Mr. Krabs is saved, and Bikini Bottom celebrates.

The score for the film was composed by Gregor Narholz and performed by the London Metropolitan Orchestra, but Hillenburg also wanted the hippest, most cutting edge bands for the film. Nickelodeon, ever aware of its audiences and their tastes, agreed. The Flaming Lips, Wilco, Motorhead, Ween, and The Shins performed additional songs. Pop superstar Avril Lavigne recorded a ripping version of the series' theme.

It didn't take long for a slew of positive reviews to roll in, as well as $140 million worldwide. Hillenburg, Narholz, and the film itself were nominated for Annie Awards from the International Animated Film Society (ASIFA). Critic Michael Rechtshaffen of *The Hollywood Reporter* nicely summed up the critical reaction to the film in his review. "Expertly navigating the tricky waters of feature adaptation like the can-do sea sponge that he is, *The SpongeBob SquarePants Movie* proves that it's possible to go from cozy TV series to the much more demanding expanse of the big screen without losing any of the little yellow guy's wide-eyed irreverence."

Nickelodeon changed direction for the look and ambience of its next important animated series. Anime-styled animated series were everywhere on American television, but to date Nickelodeon had not explored this wildly popular and influential form of cartoons. Ever attentive to trends, the network would make up ground in 2005 with a lasting hit that eventually spawned spin-off series, a live-action movie, video games, and an even wider audience.

Avatar: The Last Airbender used a heady mix of animation, mythology, and Eastern mysticism to relate a complicated story that young fans could not resist. In the basic story, the world of humans (and hybrid animals) is divided into kingdoms of Earth, Air, Fire, and Water. Special inhabitants of each city (known as "benders") have mastery of their specific element. However, only one person alive has control of all four: The Avatar.

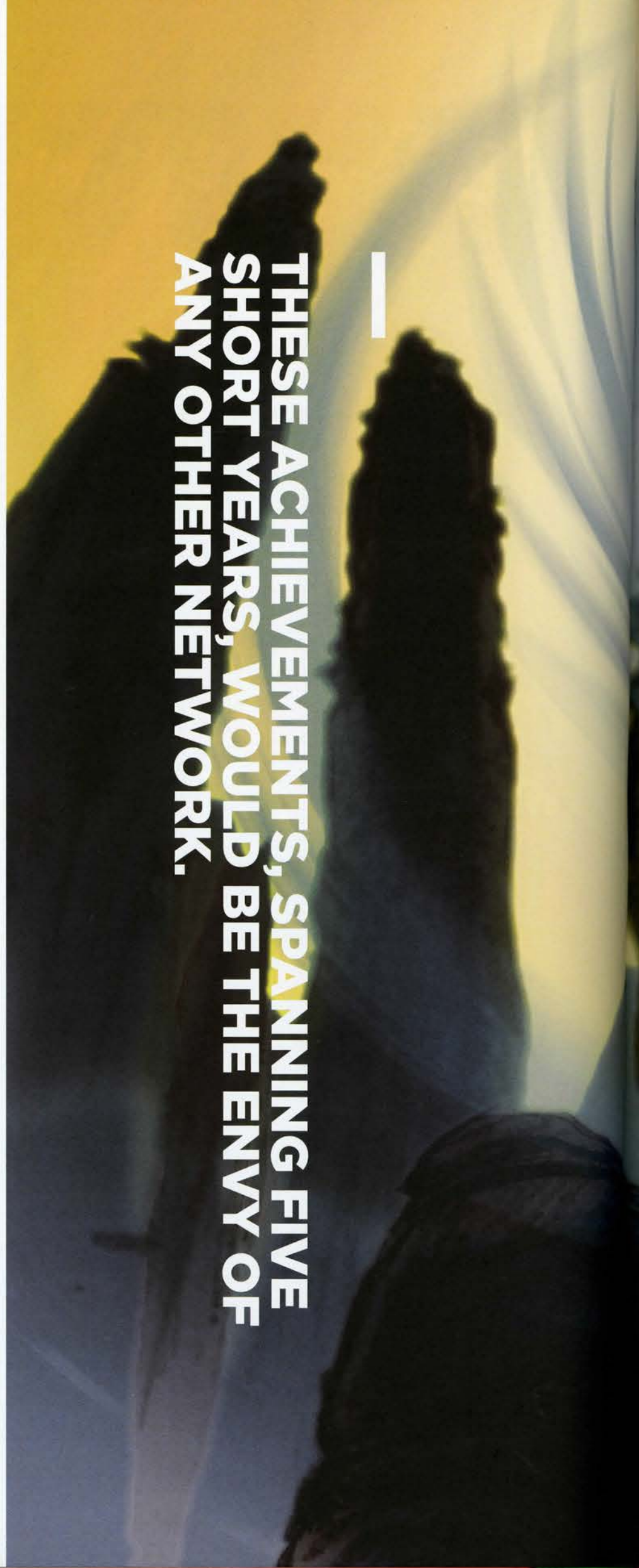
The Avatar, upon his or her passing, is reborn in a different city, keeping things in balance. During the cycle in which the series takes place, this penultimate incarnation resides in Aang, a 12-year-old Air Nomad. This would all be harmonious except for the fact that the ruler of Fire Nation, the greedy Lord Sozin, launched a world war with the intent of making the Fire Nation supreme. His terrible campaign against the Air Nomads kills most of them, but Aang escapes. Now a fugitive, Aang and the benders of the three other nations are pressed to stop Lord Sozin.

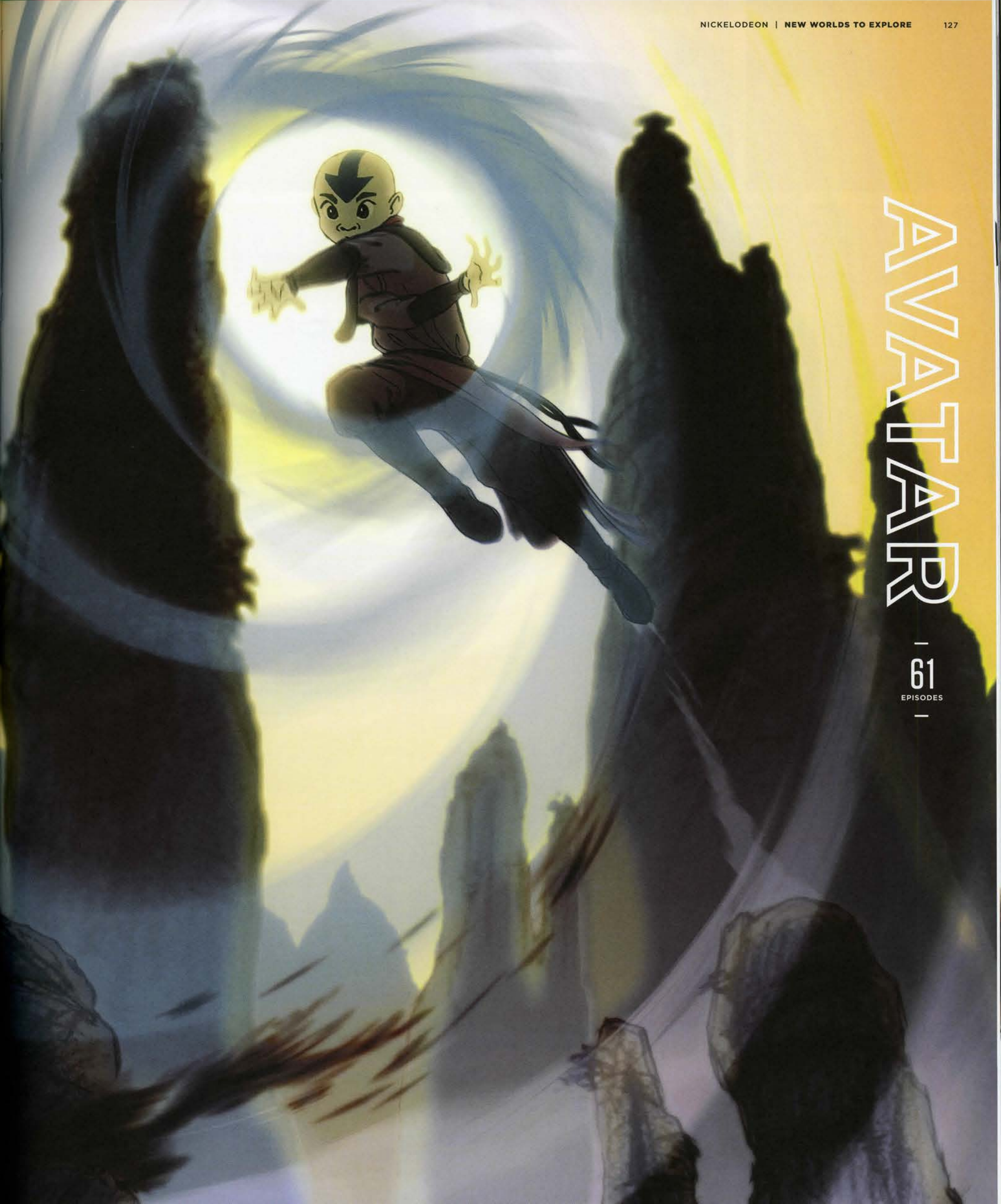
From there, creators and head writers Michael Dante DiMartino and Bryan Konietzko crafted a wondrous saga that defies simple synopsis. Suffice it to say that the stunning, anime-influenced art direction, complex characters, and mythic sense of adventure gave Nickelodeon one of the biggest hits of this era. The show would receive numerous award nominations and wins, including a daytime Emmy nomination, a Peabody Award (for broadcast quality), the Genesis Award (for outstanding portrayal of animal issues), and, of course, the Annie Award for best children's show in 2008.

These achievements, spanning five short years, would be the envy of any other network. Nickelodeon was the place every kid wanted to be for adventure, laughs, and unforgettable movies. Nick would end this era on high note by creating a spinoff series for the preschool set. Although the series was new, it featured old familiar friends beloved by millions of young kids.

NICK-NACK NO. 409

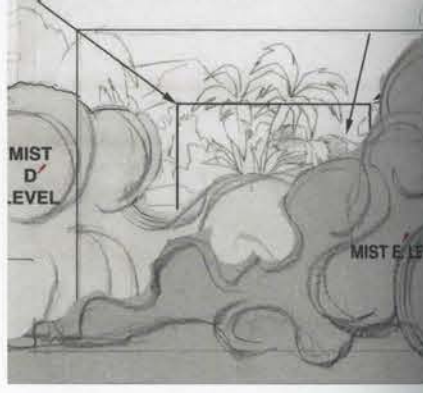
Always alert for the hottest trends, Nickelodeon greenlighted this anime-influenced series in 2005. By the end of its run, it was one of the most highly acclaimed animated shows on cable.





AVATAR

61
EPISODES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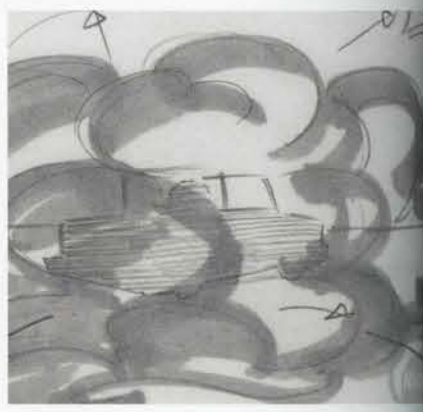

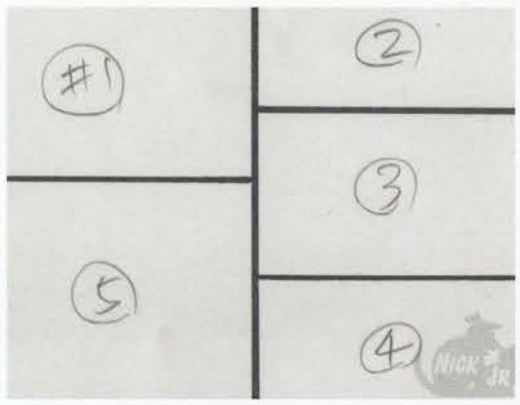
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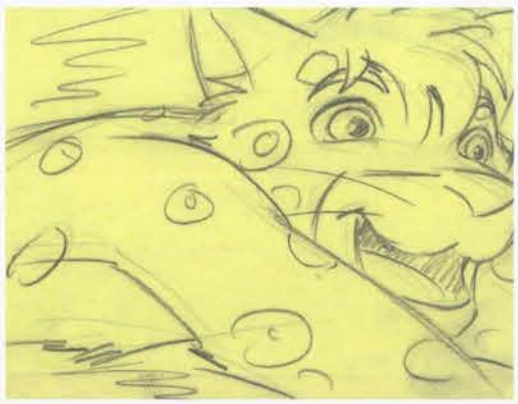
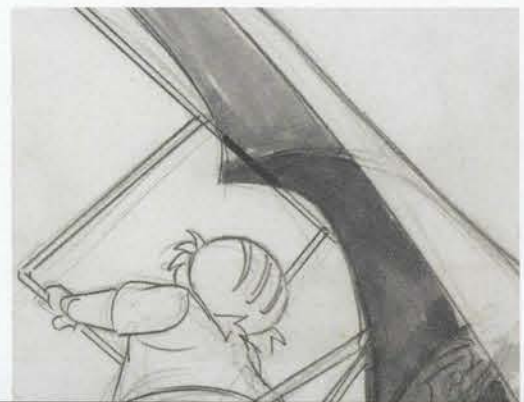
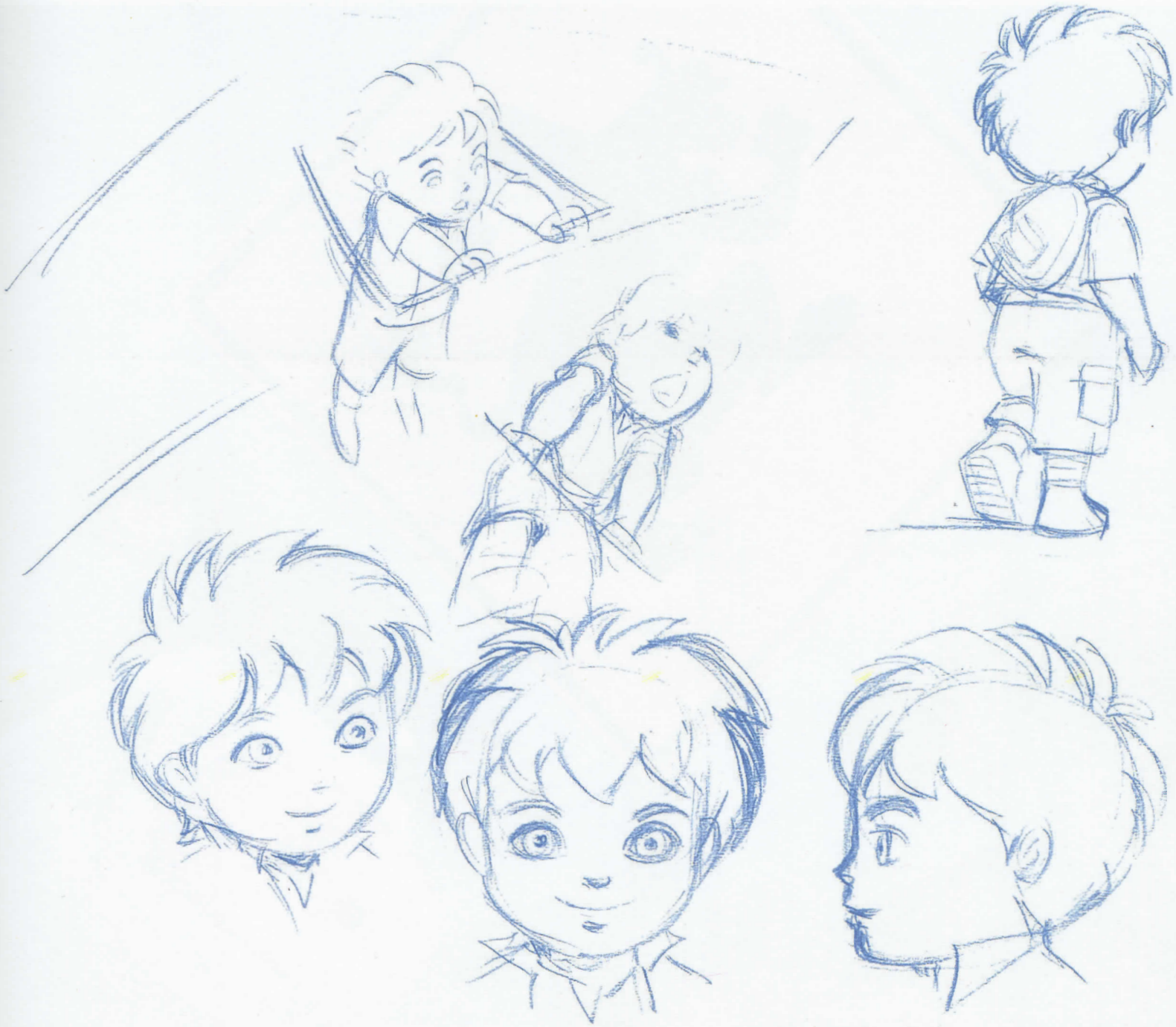




GO
DIEGO
GO!



GO, DIEGO, GO!

NICK-NACK NO. 659

No matter where they live, Earth's animals are under the protection of Dora's good friend Diego, who rescues them from dangerous situations. This nature-themed spinoff earned Nick countless accolades and high ratings.

Go, Diego, Go! features Dora the Explorer's eight-year old cousin Diego in his own series. The energetic young Latino lad is now in charge of animal rescues around the world, a job he performs while educating audiences about nature, ecology, and the creatures that share the Earth. Diego monitors animals in need of rescue from his rainforest Animal Rescue Center, assisted by his talking "pet," Baby Jaguar, and his older sister Alicia. Cousin Dora shows up for the occasional cameo, and thanks to the team, every animal in peril is safely rescued.

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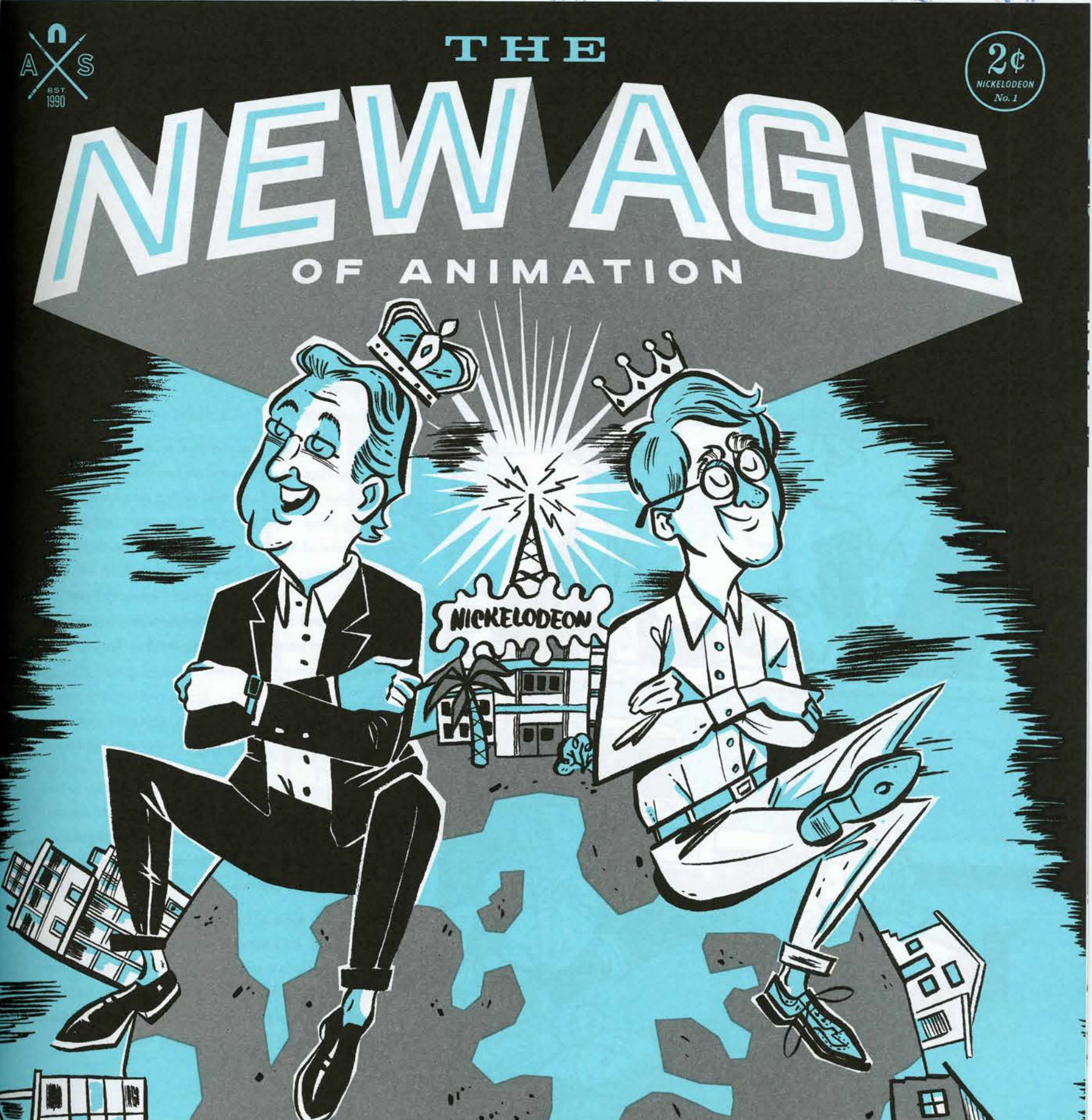
EPISODES


THE
NEW AGE
OF ANIMATION
2¢
NICKELODEON
No. 1
EST. 1990
NICKELODEON

HOW DID YOU BECOME INVOLVED WITH NICKELODEON?

It wasn't a straight shot. I turned from politics to media. I got a job at the Hearst newspapers, and my beat was actually writing about kids' TV. I was also writing about music videos for *Rolling Stone*. I catapulted that into a relationship with Fred Seibert and Alan Goodman who were the original creative directors at MTV. They asked me to form with them a production and TV company called Chauncey Street. After we created a few hits for Nickelodeon, they asked me to come on board there as an executive. From there I eventually became president.

HOW DID SOME OF YOUR FORMER EXPERIENCES SHAPE YOUR PROGRAMMING?

Throughout my career with Nickelodeon I've tried to take a point of view that I'm entertaining people, but we call it "values-oriented entertainment" in which I've always tried to communicate positive values and social change through the work that I've done.

If you look at some of the things I've tried to do at Nickelodeon, for example, I banned the words "shut up!" I thought that was a positive family change. I never liked it in my family, and I didn't want it on the shows. That's just a small measure of positive things we tried to do. A bigger example, I started The Big Help there, which was

a community service campaign. It's always been a part of my self-mission statement.

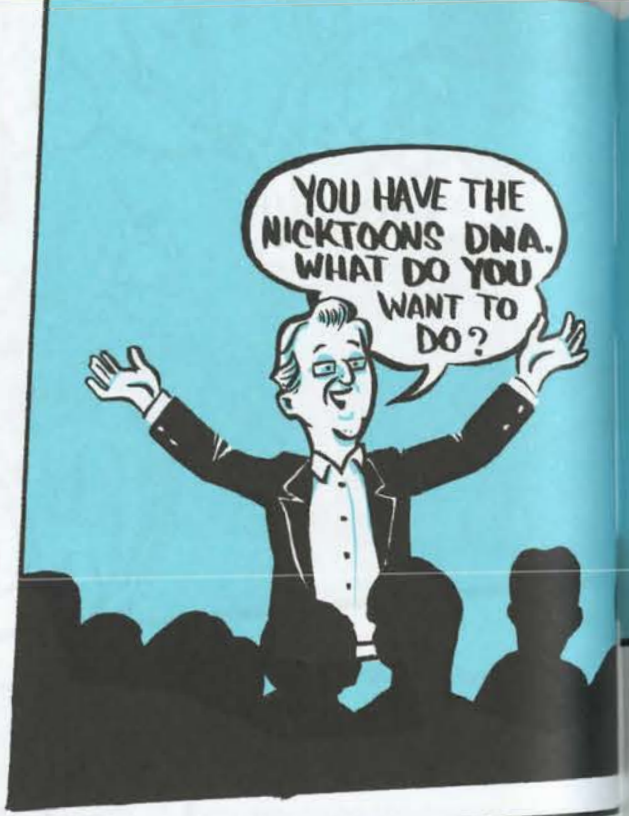
WHAT WERE SOME OF THE CHALLENGES YOU FACED IN MAKING SHOWS "BY KIDS FOR KIDS"?

It is extremely difficult for a child actor immersed in the business, especially getting all those accolades, to get any sort of perspective. Especially if they're plopped down in Hollywood where everyone is a part of that world.

You have to have a strong family and support system, that's the most important thing. When we were casting, one of the things I always did was ask to meet the parents. So, when we looked at Melissa Joan Hart, we met her wonderful mother and we knew that there was a family and a strong support system that was going to work. Kenan Thompson's mother was amazing, and you could see how stable and smart Kenan is. So, if these kids have that support system, they really have a leg up on keeping life in perspective. They have to be confronted sometimes and learn that people are going to say "no" to them. When they can't hear a "no," that's when the trouble starts.

THE CREATION OF NICKTOONS WAS ONE OF THE MOST CRUCIAL POINTS IN THE NETWORK'S HISTORY. WHAT WAS YOUR ROLE?

One of the things my boss Herb Scannell and I also championed there, was fresh ideas. We were given $350 million from Viacom to build and expand, and figure out how exactly to build our animation business. One of the things I did was invest in the first animation studio in LA in 35 years, the Nicktoons studio, and the reason was to bring together creators with a creator-driven animation style—a place that allowed each creator to have their own unit as opposed to the studio assembly lines of the past. Hanna-Barbera and Warner Bros. were great studios, but a lot of the style looked the same. Nicktoons was able to produce different looks, styles, and points of view. We told the creators, "You have the Nicktoons DNA, what do you want to do?"



THE SECRET OF NICK'S SUCCESS IS PUTTING KIDS FIRST, RIGHT?

One of the things at Nickelodeon that we all agreed on is that you should have some sort of criteria to chase for ideas, but you can't be too dogmatic. One of the things other TV shows do is take an adult and put the adult at the center of things, with kids revolving around them. We always said, no, we put kids first so that kids are at the center and the adults revolve around them.

HOW DID YOU FIRST GET INVOLVED WITH NICKELODEON?

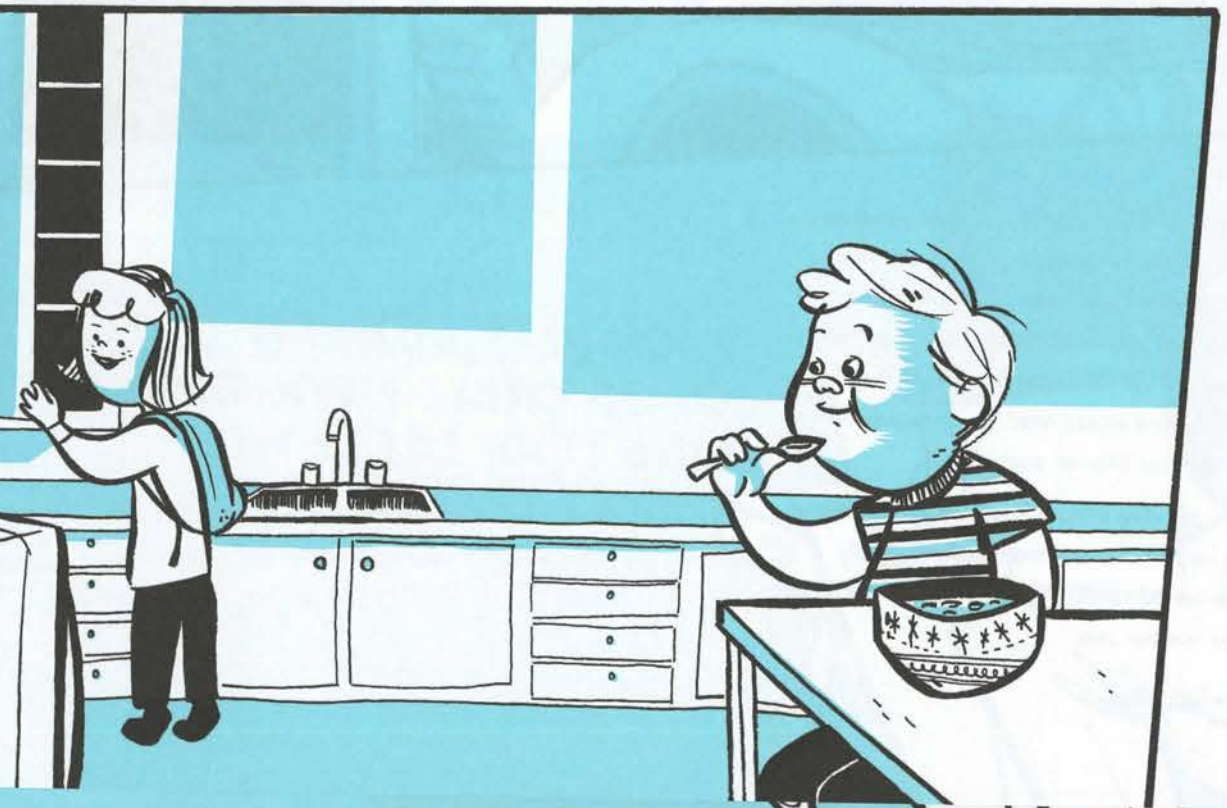
On May 5, 1980 I went to work at the cable television company Warner Amex Satellite Television, a company I knew almost nothing about—except that Bob Pittman worked there. He and I had worked in production at WHN, a country music radio station and we met there. He called me because I had been recommended to run the production department of The Movie Channel. When I got there, they introduced me to another channel Warner Amex had—Nickelodeon. Over the three years I was there, I became creative director of MTV and had great relationships with the folks running Nickelodeon at the time. At the time, Nick was a non-commercial run in the mold of "PBS for Kids." My favorite show on Nick at this time was one where they put a camera on one panel of a comic book and someone would read the dialogue then move to the next panel (only DC Comics were used as Warner owned DC).

MTV asked me to consult with Nickelodeon but, as I didn't know from kids programming then, whatever I might suggest would fly in the face of conventional wisdom. Luckily, that's exactly what they wanted. At the time we started consulting, Nick was ranked 30 of 30 cable networks. One year later they were number one.

NICK WAS RANKED 30 OF 30 CABLE NETWORKS. ONE YEAR LATER THEY WERE NUMBER ONE.

YOU WERE ONE OF THE CREATORS OF NICK AT NITE. HOW DID THAT START?

In the beginning, Nickelodeon used to go off the air at 8:00 p.m. MTV Networks owned a few of the very rare satellite transponders needed for cable television and leased the nighttime space, after 8:00 p.m., to a channel called ARTS. When ARTS got their own transponder and no longer needed Nickelodeon's airtime at night, the network tried to figure out what to do with the evening block. They asked many people for suggestions—including us. They explained that the company, for reasons beyond me, was required to use a library of 250 *The Donna Reed Show* episodes that the company bought. That delighted me! When I was 14 I had mononucleosis and *The Donna Reed Show* was rerun every day for six weeks and helped me get through it. Alan and I had been pitching an oldies TV show to ABC and were really thinking about doing a television equivalent of an oldies radio station—the "greatest hits" of all time. And that's what we did.



HOW DID NICK COME UP WITH THE "KIDS FIRST" PHILOSOPHY?

Back in 1985, when Gerry Laybourne was running the company and Debby Beece was running programming, the general consensus was that the parents were more important than the kids—the parents were the gatekeepers to everything the kids did. Gerry and Debby came to the radical conclusion that if you got to a kid's heart and mind, there was nothing the parents could do to stop a kid from watching. If you make kids happy, they will reward you with their attention and engagement.

HOW IMPORTANT WAS AND IS ANIMATION TO NICKELODEON?

Hugely important. Back then, the entire diet of cartoons on Saturday morning was like giving kids french fries all the time. What we knew was we needed to give kids a range of animation (and live action). By the late 1980s they had nice range of live series going and they had picked up two shows from Europe—*Danger Mouse* and *Belle and Sebastian*—the latter series the inspired the name of the indie-pop group. They also picked up a bunch of old Yogi Bear cartoons. As the network grew, they knew they had to create new animation that reflected the channel's point-of-view—not just simply picking up older programs. Anne Sweeney (head of business affairs) and Debby Beece took me out to breakfast at the Paramount hotel to ask me help find animators. My advice was to do shorts and show them to an audience—a no-no in animation at the time due to the cost. Soon after, Nick made a group of pilots from which came *Doug*, *Rugrats* and *The Ren & Stimpy Show*—the original Nicktoons. They changed the game for television animation from that point forward. It was an explosion that changed everything.

Nickelodeon has been at the forefront of making the world understand that animation is one of the great art forms and storytelling media. The channel has now spawned a whole new generation of creators who grew up with its Nicktoons—artists who are not satisfied to recreate the cartoons they grew up with, but want to bring something new to it. We are in a new golden age now, thanks to Nickelodeon.

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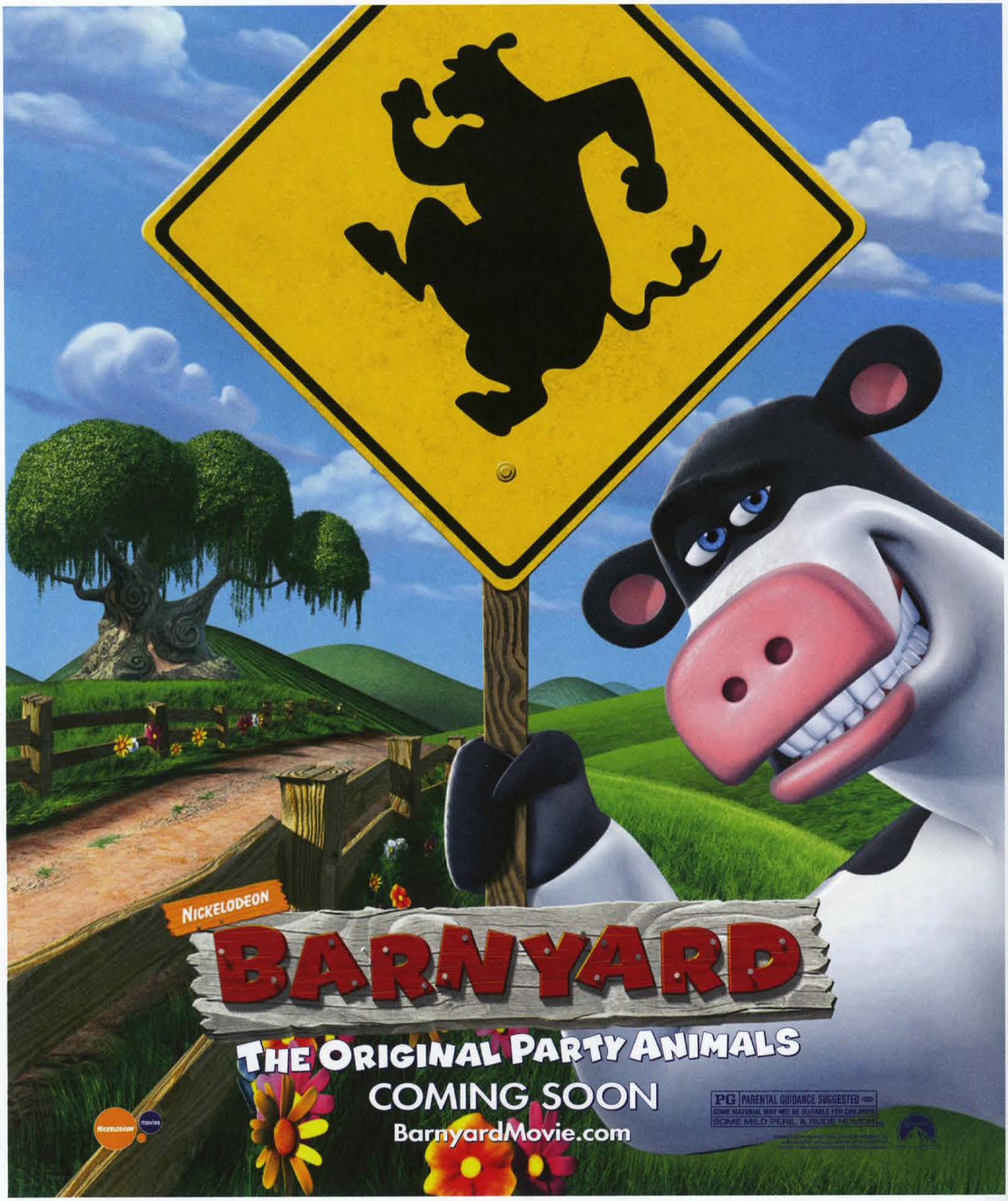
NICKELODEON
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SOME MILD PERIL & RUDE HUMOR
NICKELODEON movies

Nick turned the corner into the late "aughts" with a pair of entertaining movies that showed off the in-house talent Nick fans had come to appreciate. *Barnyard: The Original Party Animals* (2006) was directed by Steve Oedekerk, one of the talents behind *Jimmy Neutron*. The movie tells the tale of a barnyard whose inhabitants included Otis, the laziest cow in the world.

Otis would rather party down with his farmhouse pals than face his responsibilities, but when marauding coyotes kill his father and threaten the farm, Otis finds newfound strength and maturity. In the end the coyotes and their evil pack leader Dag are routed, and the film joyously ends in ... what else? A party! *Barnyard* earned $116 million worldwide and the frisky critters were so popular with kids that a TV spinoff series aired on Nick the following year.

NICK-NACK NO. 047

When the farmer's away, the Original Party Animals will play! Aerosmith contributed a song to writer/director Steve Oedekerk's 2006 CGI farmhouse romp. Nick converted the film's success into a TV series the following year.

NICK-NACK NO. 137

Jack Black's manic acting and touch for physical comedy were perfect for the role of masked wrestler Nacho. Audiences also warmed to his tender side as he sheltered young orphans in Nick's hit film.

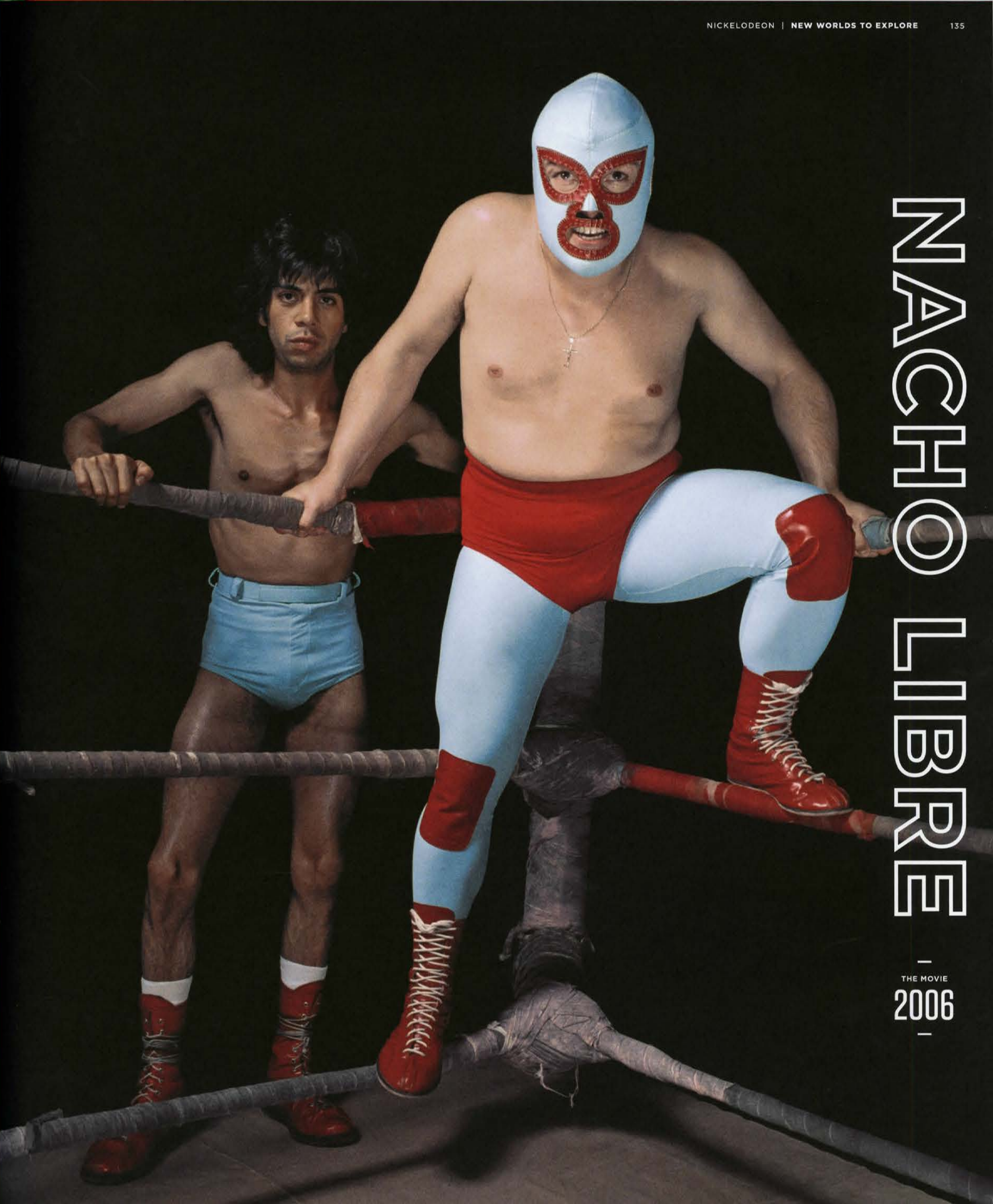
NACHO LIBRE ENTERTAINED WORLDWIDE AUDIENCES TO THE TUNE OF $100 MILLION, EXTENDING NICK'S STRING OF CINEMATIC SUCCESS.

NICK-NACK NO. 083

A series of unscripted "confessionals" were recorded by Jack Black during filming, and uploaded to the web as video podcasts, taking audiences behind the scenes.

Nacho Libre also hit theater screens in the summer of 2006, a wrestling comedy featuring the manic, irresistible Jack Black. Black plays Ignatio Libre, an orphanage cook who has little to feed his young charges. Ignatio hits upon the idea of becoming a *luchador* (masked wrestler). This will earn needed money for the kids (and also endear him to the orphanage's comely tutor, Sister Encarnación). After losing countless matches, Libre and his tag-team partner Esquelito seem to be failures, but when another fighter is incapacitated, Libre is signed to wrestle world champion *luchador* Ramses. Guess which team comes out on top?

Nacho Libre entertained worldwide audiences to the tune of $100 million, extending Nick's string of cinematic success. Parents, having learned to trust the "kids' network" long before, were glad to have Nick making fun, clean-minded movies. And the kids? They just lapped them up!



NACHO LIBRE

THE MOVIE

2006

NICK-NACK NO. 521

Who could resist a web-based show starring talented Miranda Cosgrove? Not Nick's teen audience! This cutting-edge sitcom had a five-year run on the network, and won 22 American and international awards.

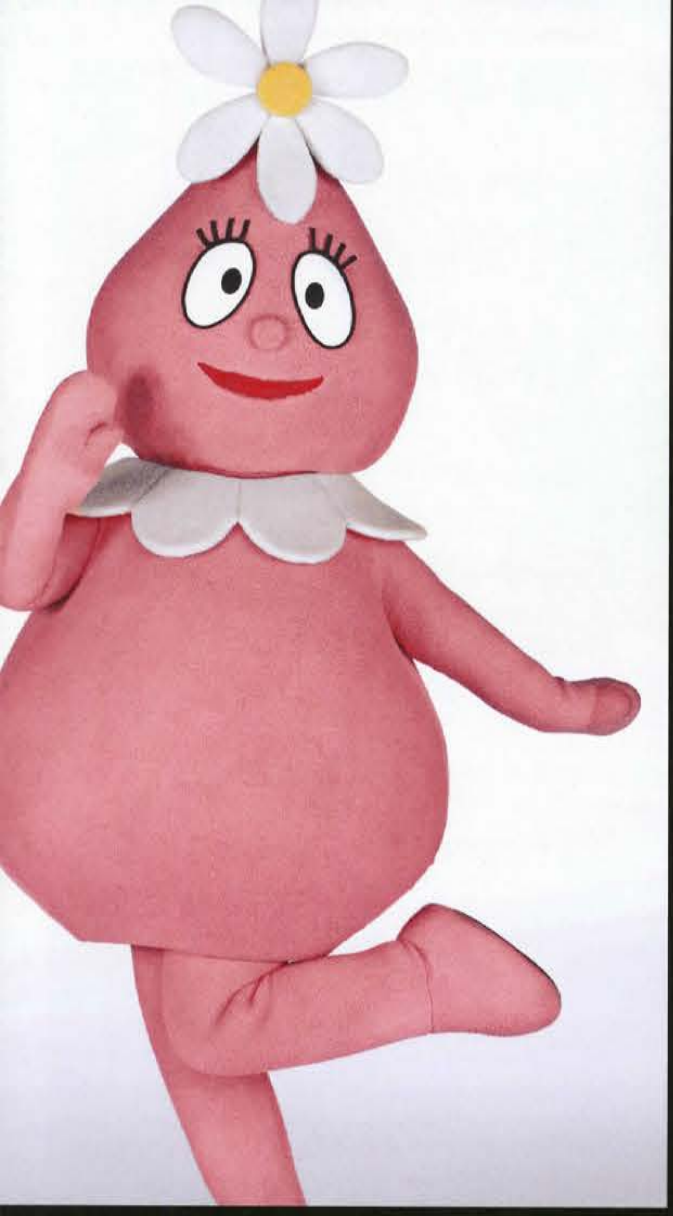
The year 2007 saw the premiere of one of the most contemporary, cutting-edge shows available to teen viewers. *iCarly* was created by Nickelodeon hitmaker Dan Schneider, and answered the question of what it might look like if two teen girlfriends had their own web-based variety show. Carly Shay (Miranda Cosgrove) and Sam Puckett (Jennette McCurdy) are videoed by their friend Freddie Benson (Nathan Kress) while cutting up at a talent show. He posts it online where it goes viral, and two stars are born. Carly (whose only adult supervision comes from her older brother Spencer, a manic inventor played by Jerry Trainor) and wise-cracking cynic Sam soon become celebrities.

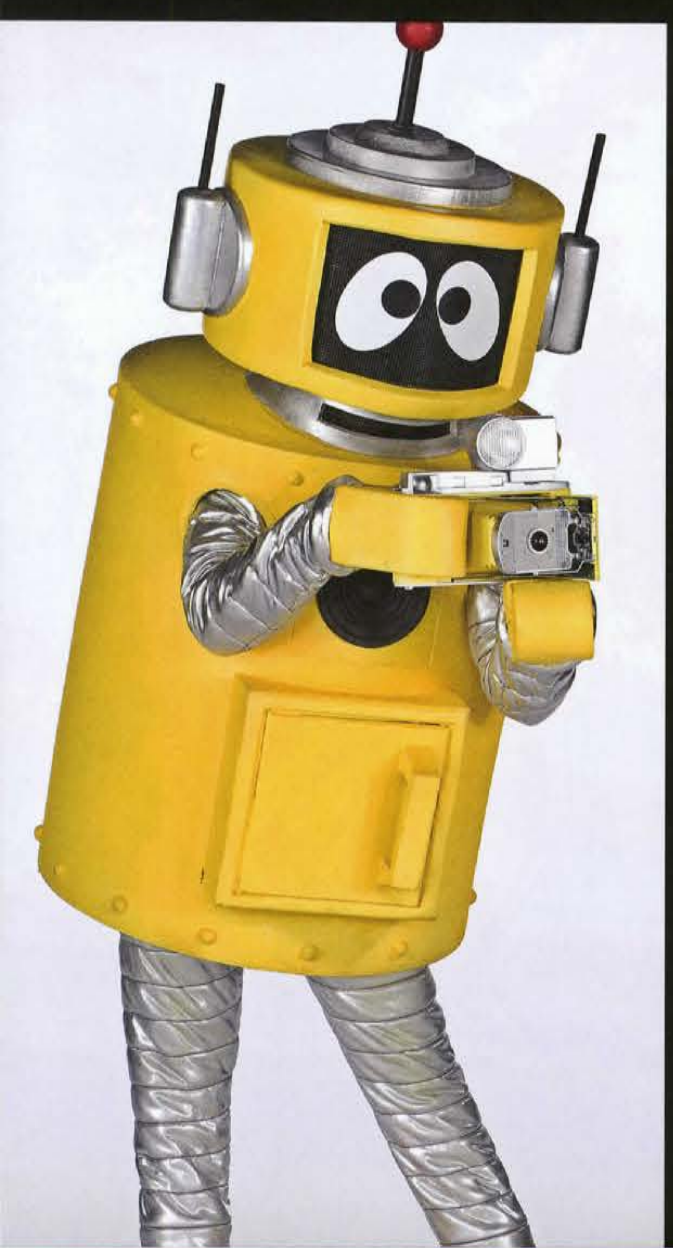
Their online show features talent contests, dancing, cooking, and garners a worldwide following. *iCarly* is an updated, tech-savvy version of the kid variety shows Nick had tremendous success with in earlier times, and the formula was still a solid one. Kids loved the fact that Nick had latched on to something they now couldn't live without–media technology–and melded it with a cast of actors that any kid could identify with. Soon Nick put up an actual *iCarly* website and encouraged young viewers to contribute their own content. Other networks had websites as well, but Nickelodeon was the first to have its audiences help to build them.

FANBOY & CHUMCHUM

Fanboy and Chum Chum is an outstanding example of how Nickelodeon finds and develops promising new talent. The characters, created by Eric Robles, made their debut as a short on *Random! Cartoons* in 2009. Nickelodeon later promoted the characters into an Emmy award-winning series of their own. Best friends Fanboy and Chum Chum are young geeks-in-training, obsessed with comic books, action figures, and superheroes.

Animated in 3D, these goggle-eyed adventurers put a bizarre spin on a successful formula for Nick—the schoolyard sitcom. Fanboy and Chum Chum inhabit a bizarre world populated by characters like friend/rival Kyle, an odd boy with a British lilt, Yo, a girl with a crush on Chum Chum, and Oz, who owns his own comic book store. The show was yet another creative peak for the kids' network that carries on to this day.





YO GABBA GABBA! ATTRACTED ACTS LIKE THE KILLERS, JIMMY EAT WORLD, MY CHEMICAL ROMANCE, WEEZER, AND THE FLAMING LIPS.

Meanwhile, Nickelodeon continued to please and amaze its younger viewers. Christian Jacobs and Scott Schultz created a landmark series for the network that proved to be an enduring hit. Capitalizing on kids' love for performers in wild costumes, the pair came up with *Yo Gabba Gabba!* This show, hosted by the ebullient DJ Lance Rock, features five colorful critters found nowhere in nature. Foofa is a pink ball topped by flower petals. Toodee is a bright blue combination of cat and dragon. Muno is a nubby red Cyclops, and Brobee a striped green clump of smiling hair. Rounding out the bunch is yellow robot Plex. What kid wouldn't be entertained?

But that isn't all. Besides the antics of the freaky five, kids also enjoy the animated adventures of Super Martian Robot Girl and rock to the music of the best contemporary bands. *Yo Gabba Gabba!* attracted such acts as The Killers, Jimmy Eat World, My Chemical Romance, Weezer, and The Flaming Lips among others. Does Nick leave anything out?

The Fresh Beat Band was Nickelodeon's next team of musical stars. Introducing lead singer DJ Twist, Marina on the drums, Shout rockin' the keyboards, and guitarist/violinist Kiki, they sang, played and won the hearts of audiences and critics alike.

The kids usually face a problem, solve it as a team, and then rock the house. A cute feature of the show that made it crossover to younger viewers is The Junior Beats, a quartet of kids that dress like their idols and perform as well. Teens and kids not only watched the Fresh Beat Band—they wanted to be like them. Nickelodeon capped off this illustrious era in perfect character with a show for kids, starring kids, and loved by kids. A rocking 67 episodes later, the unbeatable combination of teens and rock music brought about yet another creative peak for the kids' network that carries on to this day.

NICK-NACK NO. 829

Nick's lively hit show was inspired by TV puppet shows of the past. Rich with color, music, and original animation, *Yo Gabba Gabba!* reinvented the puppet variety show for a new generation of Nick viewers.

BECOMING A GLOBAL BRAND

ERA

5

PAGES 140–173

NICK-NACK NO. 607

It's not just kids who love SpongeBob! The top-rated Kids' Choice Awards features some of the greatest entertainers to be found on any cable network, including Pharrell in 2014.

NICKELODEON ROLLED INTO A NEW DECADE AS A GLOBAL BRAND, PUTTING ITS ORANGE STAMP ON 150 COUNTRIES.

For an increasing number of kids in the U.S. and around the world, Nickelodeon had become a multilayered experience that spread far beyond the TV screen.

One stunning example was the establishment of Nickelodeon Latin America. Beginning in 2009, Nick's showcase event, the Kids' Choice Awards, gave kids the vote in Mexico, Brazil, Colombia, and Argentina. Before long, the event was also held in Indonesia and the UK.

NICK-NACK NO. 271

Gross green globs of glorious goo gushing over guests: A Nickelodeon trademark since its earliest days. You didn't have to be famous to be slimed, but it didn't help you, either!

NOT JUST A KIDS' NETWORK, NICKELODEON IS NOW A BRAND THAT REACHES KIDS THROUGH ALL FORMS OF MEDIA.

Nickelodeon was, by now, so beloved by its audiences that they virtually demanded to take Nick home with them from the local store. The network obliged by offering kids clothing, toys, collectables, books, and many other entertaining products. *Jimmy Neutron*, *Rugrats*, *Avatar*, and *SpongeBob SquarePants* spun off into entertaining video games. The Nickelodeon Universe amusement park had become a huge attraction at the renowned Mall of America since opening in 2008. Promotional agreements with Kraft Foods and Embassy Suites Hotels helped to establish new venues for the Nickelodeon brand.

With music such an important part of kids' lives, the Nickelodeon brand has paid special attention to licensing original music from its shows, launching Nick Radio, and creating events like the Mega Music Fest. Nickelodeon movie properties proved to be worldwide hits. The days of Pinwheel were far in the past: Not just a kids' network, Nickelodeon is now a brand that reaches kids through all forms of media. Through it all, Nickelodeon displayed an amazing ability to keep improvising on the formats that made them the most-watched cable show by kids and teens.

NICK-NACK NO. 002

Nickelodeon's live-action teen sitcoms hit new heights in the 2010s, and *Victorious* was a perfect example. Viewers expected to see all the joy and awkwardness of teen life, and were never disappointed.

Victorious, created by Nickelodeon veteran Dan Schneider, was a perfect case in which the network and the brand achieved perfect synergy. Tori Vega (played by Victoria Justice) is a perky teen with a great voice and a dream of becoming a pop hit-maker. Her dreams become more real when she wins a talent contest and gains admission to the Hollywood Arts High School for talented teens. As with most teen musical comedies, it's a long, crazy way to the top, but Tori has the encouragement of BFF Andre Harris (Leon Thomas III), a young musical genius.

Other students sharing Tori's offbeat teen misadventures are Robbie Shapiro (Matt Bennett), an aspiring ventriloquist who thinks his puppet Rex Powers is alive, sweet-natured good girl Cat Valentine (played by Ariana Grande, who has since actually become a pop hitmaker), and Jade West (Elizabeth Gillies), a flippant goth girl who may or may not be Tori's friend, depending on the situation. Rounding out the main cast is hunky Beck Oliver (Avan Jogia), Jade's boyfriend, who also has an occasional eye for Tori.

As usual, adults stay in the background in small roles while the world of teens takes center stage but, after all, this is a Nickelodeon production. The Nickelodeon formula of kids, their relationships, fun, and music reached new heights with *Victorious*: The teen sitcom's appealing cast, wild scripts, and lively pop music garnered four Emmy nominations, and spawned three hit CDs and a video game.

nickelodeon™
VICTORIOUS™

NICK-NACK NO. 547

Take a talented teen, put her in Hollywood Arts High School, add rivalry and romance, and that's your recipe for another Nickelodeon hit. Star Victoria Justice sang the opening theme, "Let It Shine."

When we last saw the mighty Avatar Aang, he was trying to stay one step ahead of Fire Lord Ozai, his vengeful son Zuko, and the entire Fire Nation. Little did Airbender Aang know that he was about to be waylaid by starring in a major feature film.

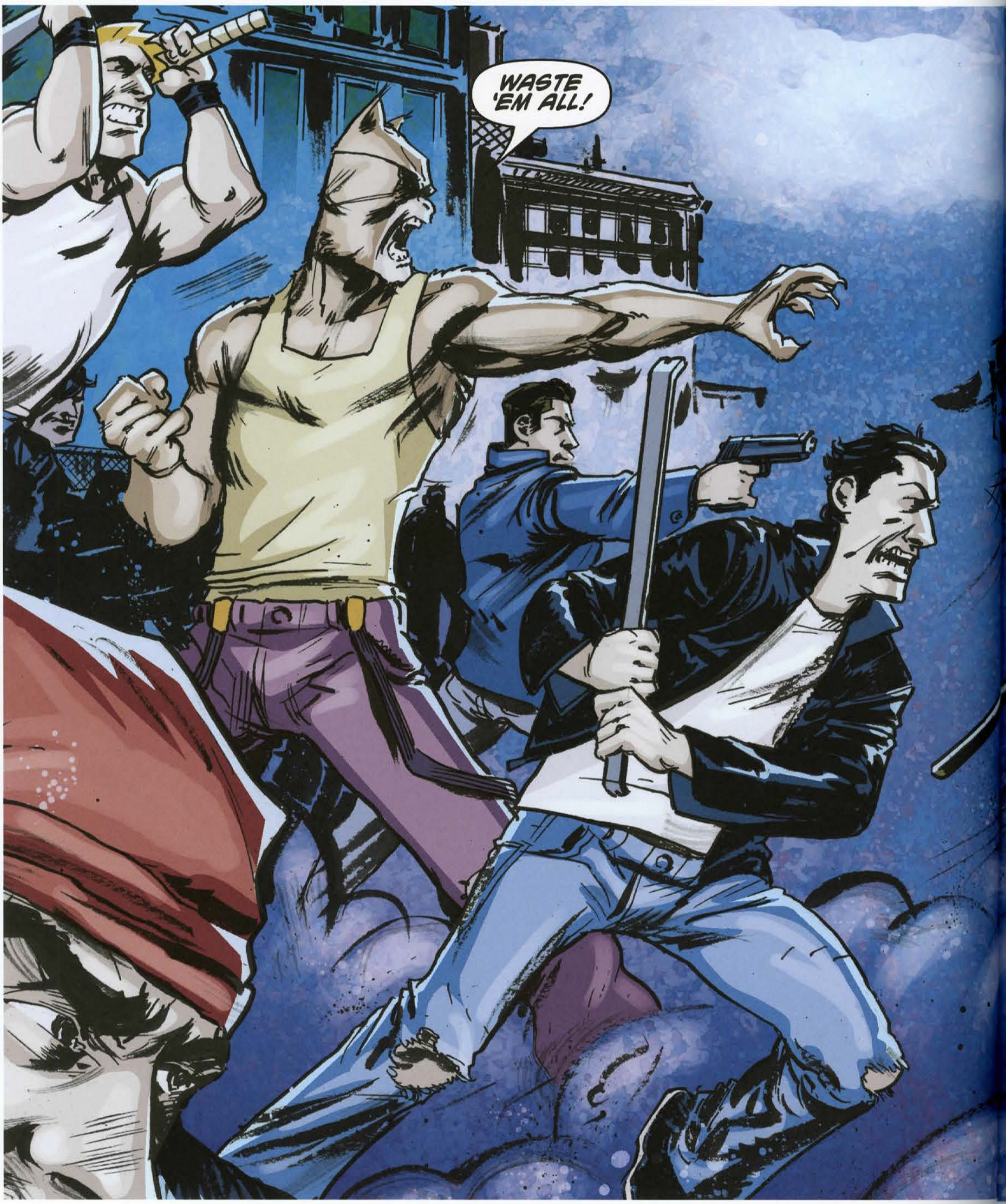
The Last Airbender (2010) was a first for Nickelodeon; rather than transferring an animated series directly to the screen, it was decided that the film would be produced as a live-action adventure. The movie was produced, directed, and written by M. Night Shyamalan, famous for his movie hits *The Sixth Sense* (1999) and *Signs* (2002). Shyamalan became interested in the story after his young daughter insisted on dressing up as waterbender Katara for Halloween.

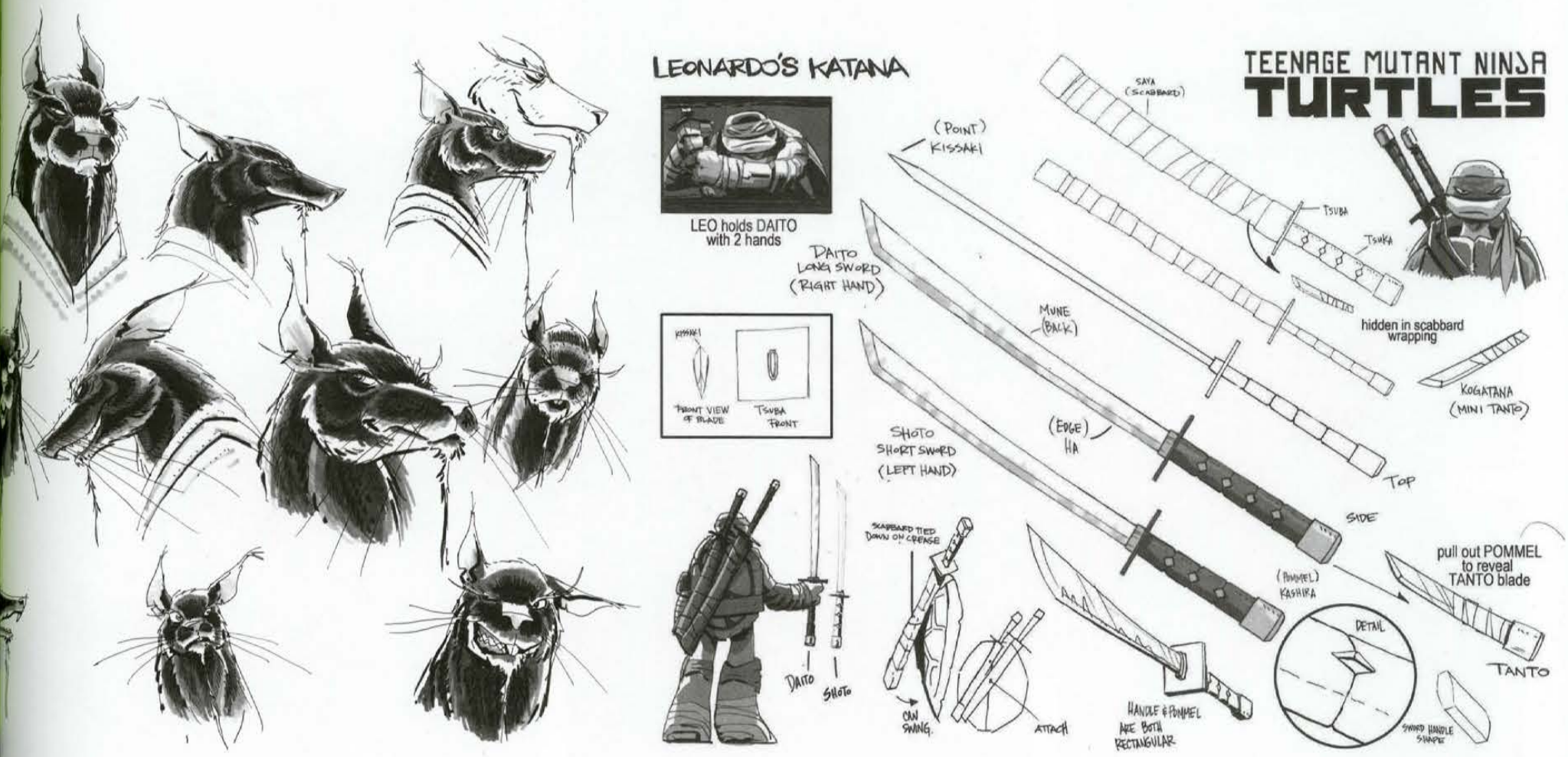
Preproduction began in 2008. The script was basically a retelling of the first 20 episodes of the animated series, with a few of the characters condensed or slightly altered to fit the screenplay. The supernatural film would need stellar special effects to tell the story, so the legendary Industrial Light & Magic team was called in to help Nickelodeon bring the avatar's world to reality; over 300 effects artists eventually collaborated on the film.

Although the animated series heavily suggested that its characters were Asian in origin, Shyamalan decided that the ethnicity of the live-action characters should have an ambiguous feel in order to boost audience identification. Young Noah Ringer plays Aang and Nicola Anne Peltz portrays Katara. The role of her clever brother, Sokka, went to Jackson Rathbone. A most notable addition to the cast was Dev Patel, the star of *Slumdog Millionaire* (2008) as Prince Zuko. This live-action retelling of *Avatar*'s first season earned $320 million worldwide on the way to becoming the 20th highest-grossing movie of 2010.

NICK-NACK NO. 919

Adapting an animated series into a live-action movie is difficult, especially one as complex as *The Last Airbender*. Nickelodeon Movies succeeded the first time it tried, adding to its impressive string of theatrical hits.


WASTE 'EM ALL!



Nickelodeon notched another first during this era, scoring a hit with a series not developed by the studio. *The Power Rangers* (first known as *The Mighty Morphin Power Rangers*) had a history going back to 1993, when they were created by Haim Saban and belonged to Saban Entertainment. The show was an instant phenomenon, drawing on many sources: martial arts, anime, teen heroes, and the clear, indisputable delineation between good and evil defined by game-changers such as Star Wars. They went on to a second Nick series called *Power Rangers Super Samurai*.

The Power Rangers was not the only outside property Nickelodeon laid claim to in this era. Much of the world knows Michelangelo, Donatello, Raphael, and Leonardo as legendary painters, but since 1984 kids are more apt to call them the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. Creators Kevin Eastman and Peter Laird published 3,000 copies of an independent comic book that year featuring four abandoned pet turtles transformed by a radioactive mishap; before long the entire country knew about—and loved—them.

At the heart of the craze are the turtles, trained to perfection in martial arts by Master Splinter, a sage sewer rat. Each turtle sports a signature weapon and wears a different color mask, the only way of telling them apart. Between Michelangelo's shouts of "Cowabunga!" and frequent visits to the pizzeria, the "heroes in a half shell" emerge from their underground home to take on the infamous Shredder and his minions in battles that are sometimes dark and serious. Aiding them on the surface is intrepid news reporter April O'Neil.

TMNT went through several animated incarnations that changed their personalities with each evolutionary turn. Nickelodeon made three crucial decisions upon acquiring the iconic reptiles in 2009. The first was to return the Turtles to back their roots by using more serious storylines. The second was to use computer-generated imagery for the series, a first for the Turtles on TV. Lastly, the Turtles underwent a slight redesign in order to be more distinguishable from one another. Following 25 years of stardom, leave it to Nickelodeon to capture four turtles utterly beloved by kids and give them a new twist, a new look, and new life as a TV hit. Michelangelo might now shout "Booyakasha!" instead of "Cowabunga," but no kid loves him any less for it.

NICK-NACK NO. 079

Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles was another cherished show that Nick updated during the 2010s. The Turtles appeared for the first time in CGI and recaptured the magic that made them a kids' favorite.

nickelodeon™ TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES™

Ever been to Bubbletucky? If you have, you've no doubt made the acquaintance of those cute, lively merpeople known as the Bubble Guppies. Jonny Belt and Robert Scull created this irresistible animated preschool series for Nickelodeon in 2011. *Bubble Guppies* was to become another beloved series for the younger set, and yet another reason why even toddlers made Nick their channel of choice.

Each episode is cohosted by Molly, a perky pink-haired guppy, and Gil, whose blue hair makes him a standout. The diverse ensemble "cast" includes Goby, a cheerful guppy with lots of imagination, Nonny, identifiable by his orange hair and scuba mask glasses, Oona, a guppy in purple pigtails who's always ready for fun, and Deema, ever-saucy in her blonde beehive coif. The guppies are actually schoolchildren, learning life's lessons from Mr. Grouper, their understanding teacher.

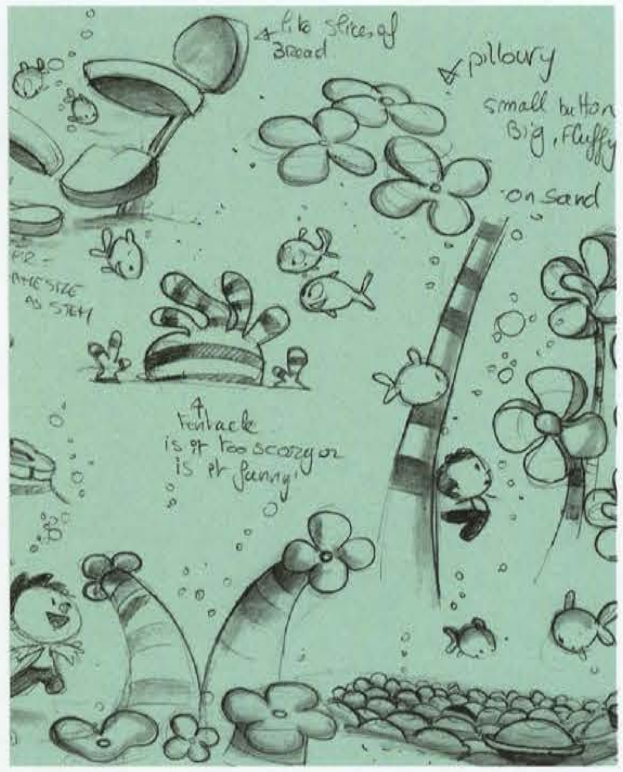
The guppies tackle a different problem in each episode, and this becomes the theme of the show for that day. Music, comedy, and games become part of the day's lessons, along with pop quizzes for the kiddies to answer at home. A recurring segment of each episode is "Lunchtime," an occasion for food, companionship, and the ritual lunchtime joke.

As a measure of their popularity, the Bubble Guppies frequently draw high ratings, made the jump to a Nintendo game, have a DVD collection, and even have fan clubs that are decidedly not of the preschool set; in fact, one fan fiction website has over one 100 stories featuring the merry merkids, all written by adult aficionados!

NICK-NACK NO. 839

Preschoolers had their day on Nick following the adventures of the undersea pack of friends called the Bubble Guppies. They're perky, they're wet, they love adventure, and they never, ever miss lunchtime.

BUBBLE GUPPIES™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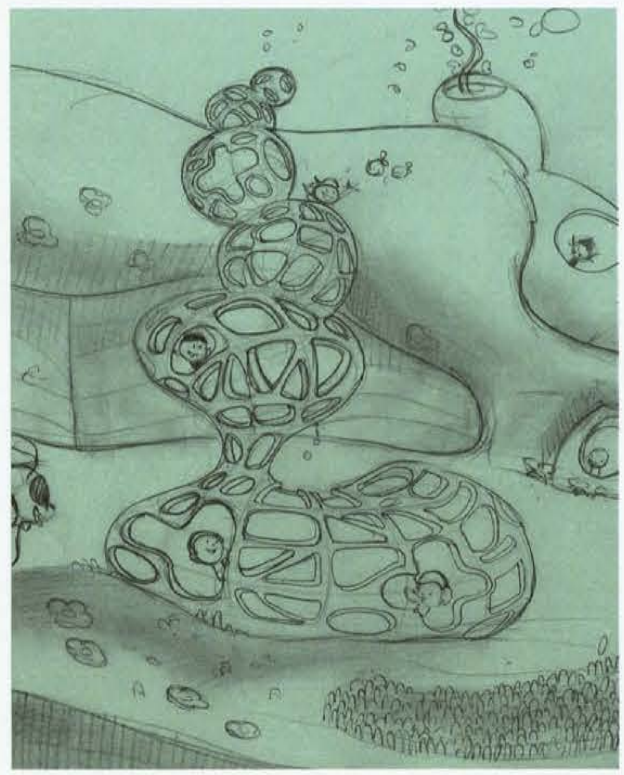

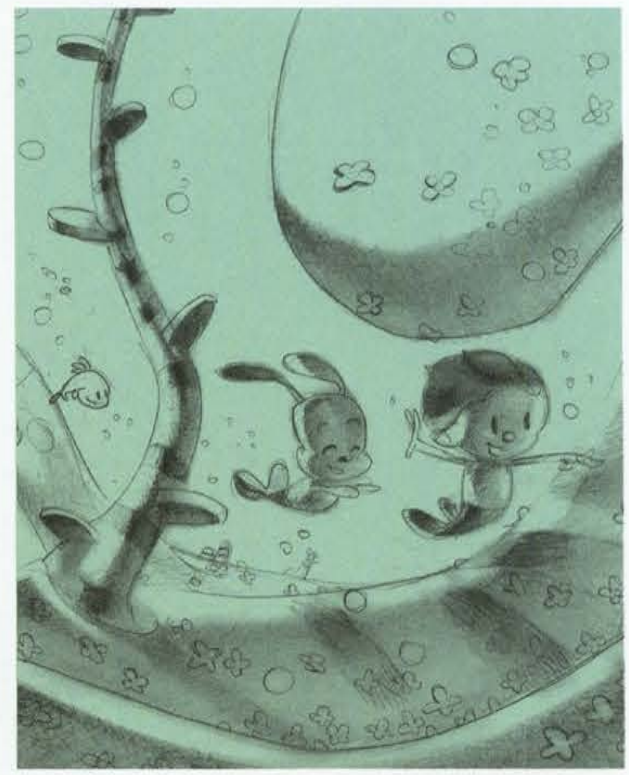

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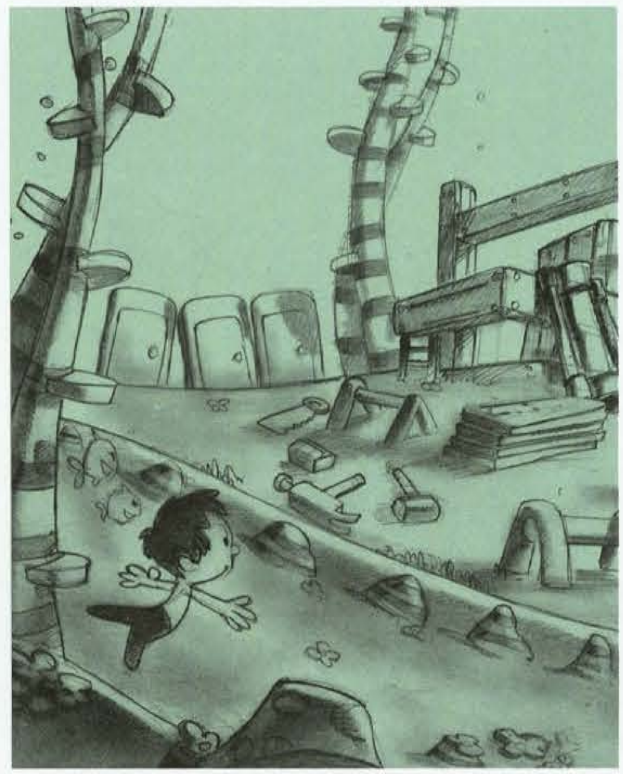

RANGO
THE MOVIE
2011

NICK-NACK NO. 227

Nickelodeon Movies produced *Rango*, the Oscar winner for best animated film of 2011 and winner of 26 other film awards.

But back to dry land. After producing a slew of hit movies over the years, Nickelodeon had scads of positive reviews, box office clout, and the desire to continue giving kids and teens big-screen treats. One coveted achievement that still eluded Nickelodeon, though, was an Academy Award. True, *Jimmy Neutron: Boy Genius* was nominated, but Nick's trophy case was empty. The Oscar dry spell, however, ended in 2011.

Rango, a Wild West/fish-out-of water story (OK, make that a chameleon), was one of the best and most engaging animated features of the decade. Gore Verbinski, the director whose work made *Pirates of the Caribbean* a billion-dollar franchise for Disney, directed *Rango* and also worked on the story. The film boasted the star power of Johnny Depp, who supplied the voice for the lead character. Once again, Nickelodeon engaged the services of Industrial Light & Magic to aid with the visual effects, which was the venerable company's first experience with an animated film.

The story was odd but simple. A pet chameleon, after being lost in the desert, is guided by a sympathetic armadillo named Roadkill to the town of Dirt. Dirt may be populated by desert critters, but Dodge City has nothing on this rough and rowdy town. The chameleon, actually a rather nervous sort, survives by masquerading as a mysterious drifter named Rango. From there, the references to classic Hollywood Westerns come in a nonstop flood. Critics likened Rango's character to that of Don Knotts in *The Shakiest Gun in the West*, but aficionados also noted bows to *A Fistful of Dollars* and *The Good, the Bad and the Ugly* among other great films.

Rango is pitted against a crooked mayor, the menace of gunslinger Rattlesnake Jake, and a nefarious plot to cut off Dirt's water supply. Exposed and publicly humiliated by Jake, Rango flees to the desert. He is confronted by the Spirit of the West, who tells him that "No man can walk out on his own story." The rededicated chameleon returns to Dirt and saves the day, even earning the respect of Rattlesnake Jake, who's been double-crossed by the evil mayor.

Audiences and critics applauded the picture, and so did the motion picture academy. *Rango* won best animated film of 2011, giving Nickelodeon one of its crowning achievements. *Rango* went on to win 28 film awards in all and was nominated for 10 more. *Rango*'s worldwide gross of $245 million was just icing on the cake.

THE FILM GROSSED $66 MILLION ON ITS OPENING WEEKEND, GIVING NICKELODEON'S NEW PROPERTY THE FOURTH HIGHEST WEEKEND DEBUT EVER RECORDED FOR THE MONTH OF AUGUST.

NICK-NACK NO. 479

2014 was a great year for Raphael, Donatello, Leonardo, and Michelangelo: Nickelodeon Movies teamed with blockbuster producer Michael Bay for this exciting reboot, complete with an all-new missile-firing Turtle Van. Take that, Shredder!

After winning the highest honor the academy could give, the Nickelodeon brand was now in elite company. The news would soon be even brighter: in August of 2014, Nickelodeon Movies released *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* to the nation's theaters, and the film's reception exceeded all expectations.

The new *Turtles* was produced by Michael Bay and directed by Jonathan Lieberman. The film grossed $66 million on its opening weekend, giving Nickelodeon's new property the fourth highest weekend debut ever recorded for the month of August.

TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES

NICK-NACK NO. 157

The Legend of Korra continued the saga of *Avatar: The Last Airbender* 70 years into the future. Many of Nick's viewers felt this series equaled, and even surpassed the original in storyline and animation.

Something else new made its debut in 2012, another first for Nickelodeon. The tale of Avatar, the last airbender, had been told, but fans were hungry for more; the network green-lighted a sequel series, *The Legend of Korra*.

The show is set in the world of *Avatar* but was not a spin-off: *Korra* was a new work by creators Brian Konietzko and Michael Dante DiMartino. The series focuses on a 17-year-old girl who inherits Aang's mantle of Avatar 70 years later. The Earth, Air, Fire and Water nations still exist, and have now established a huge metropolis, Republic City, where citizens of all the nations mingle.

When Korra arrives, she is drawn into bizarre, complex situations that test not only her skills and abilities, but also her spirituality. *The Legend of Korra* hews closer to Eastern mythology than does any other American series. The artistic style reflects more anime influence than even the first series did, and *Korra* seems like the culmination of everything Western artists and writers have learned from anime and manga storytelling over the past 30 years.

The action is engrossing enough for younger viewers, while the twisting storylines provide entertainment for the teens. *The Legend of Korra* was originally conceived as a 12-part miniseries. Michael Dante DiMartino intended to send Korra on a journey that would transform her "from brash young warrior to spiritual being." As the idea reached full creative bloom, Nickelodeon decided that only a full series could do the story justice. Nickelodeon's commitment to quality, and its desire to reward viewers who had loved the network's original *Avatar*, drew even greater audiences to the network.

SAM & CAT

35
EPISODES

The Nickelodeon brand's facility for versatile programming was dizzying, appealing equally to kids, teens, and young adults regardless of gender—and it soon expanded to fill several different channels: the Nick at Nite block that became its own 24-hour TV Land channel, and channels devoted to Nicktoons, TeenNick, Nick Jr., and Noggin (a co-venture with PBS). Nickelodeon meant quality whether the venue was animation, adventure, horror, comedy revues, game shows, or sitcoms, and its focus was very clear. It even knew that a hit show could take another direction even when it seemed to have run its course.

For example, what do you get when you cross *iCarly* with *Victorious*? Nick's first crossover teen sitcom. With BFF Carly away in Italy, life isn't the same for Sam Puckett (Jennette McCurdy), so she takes off on a motorcycle tour of the West Coast. Things change when she sees *Victorious*' Cat Valentine (Ariana Grande) getting tossed in the back of a garbage truck. Sam rescues her, and soon the teens are fast friends and business partners.

Dan Schneider, by now an experienced hand at the teen sitcom business, produced the show. *Sam & Cat* became an instant hit due to audience recognition, great characters, and the offbeat, fun sense of style that Nick viewers had come to love. Jennette McCurdy reprises her role as cool, fearless Sam, and Ariana Grande again stars as the ditzy, kind-hearted student from Hollywood Arts High. Together they start up "Sam and Cat's Super Rockin' Funtime Babysitting Service" and try to make their fortune.

Can any teen job lead to more mishaps, mischief, and potential disaster than babysitting? Certainly not for these two young entrepreneurs! The show tended to focus on Sam and Cat's misadventures and friendship rather than on romantic involvements. The major male lead is a get-rich-quick wheeler-dealer named Dice (Cameron Ocasio) who also manages a martial arts fighter named Goomer. Dice is pure comic relief in most episodes.

Sam & Cat also bent the Nickelodeon rules by introducing a sympathetic adult character who is nearly as hip as the girls. Maree Cheatham portrays Nona, Cat's way *kewl* grandmother.

This series was actually Nickelodeon's second crossover effort; Jimmy Neutron and Timmy Turner (*The Fairly OddParents*) occasionally joined forces, but *Sam & Cat* was Nick's first attempt at a live-action team up. Kids and teens were pleased, Nickelodeon was once again the master of teen sitcoms, and Ariana Grande went on to become a pop superstar.

NICK-NACK NO. 359

This *Victorious* spinoff was not only wildly popular, it proved that once again, Nickelodeon was masterful at finding gifted teen stars capable of carrying a show, or even several shows.

NICK-NACK NO. 041

Sanjay and Craig is the touching story of a boy and his pet snake. Actually, it's a surreal rollercoaster ride that perfectly represents Nick's penchant to let creators run wild with their ideas.

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SANJAY AND CRAIG

Nickelodeon was renowned for its commitment to ethnic diversity, and in 2013 the network broke ground in the field of animation. *Sanjay and Craig* premiered in 2013 and was the first network cartoon to star an Indian-American youth. Sanjay Patel is the 12-year-old boy; Craig Slithers is his talking pet snake, a fact kept well hidden from others. The series was created by Jim Dirschberger, Jay Howell, and Andreas Trolf.

Sanjay and Craig somewhat recalls Nick's earlier hit *Hey Arnold!* The lead character lives in a bizarre, almost magical urban world populated by no less than 34 other major/supporting characters. There is also a girl (Megan Sparkles) with a secret crush on Sanjay. Sanjay himself has eyes for fast food worker Belle Pepper but can't quite bring himself to express his ardor. Sanjay has an understanding friend in Hector Flanagan, but life can be tough when you're 12, especially in Sanjay's weird, weird world.

Chief among Sanjay's antagonists is his neighbor, Mr. Leslie Noodleman, who is more than a bit off his rocker. Driven insane by his prank-loving dad, the snake-phobic Noodleman considers it his mission to kill Craig. This is tough, because Craig is actually a clever master of disguises. Other characters in the series have bizarre hobbies, play in slash metal bands, have been action movie stars, possess weird phobias and unusual obsessions, or are just flat-out strange. Sanjay's own father has even built a dancing robot, the "Partybot." Sanjay appears to be living in an alternate universe where human behavior is as random as possible, and under the circumstances, a talking snake appears nearly normal. *Sanjay and Craig* is produced by Will McRobb and Chris Viscardi; Nickelodeon fans no doubt remember them as the producers of *The Adventures of Pete & Pete* (1993), Nickelodeon's equally surreal live-action sitcom. The tradition lives on in *Sanjay and Craig*.

From *Ren & Stimpy* to *Invader Zim* to *Sanjay and Craig*, Nickelodeon has never wavered from giving fresh, original artists and creators a chance to shine, no matter how offbeat their material might be. *Breadwinners* (2014) is next in a long line of such fascinating experiments. Who and what are the Breadwinners?

Picture a waterlogged planet named Pondgea. Add two neon green ducks (who do not in the least resemble ducks) named Sway Sway and Buhdeuce who own a speeding rocket van. Give them a job delivering fresh bread to all corners of the world. Their inspiration? A mythic figure in a Speedo called The Bread Maker.

Like video game avatars, these ducks can "power up" their butts for extra bursts of superhuman might. How about a beaver in Viking garb called Oonski the Great whose prime goal is to steal the rocket van for himself? Getting the idea?

Breadwinners was the collaboration of Steve Borst and Gary DiRaffaele, two animators who created a four-and-a-half minute film about two dumb ducks as entertainment for a short-film festival in New York. The short went online, came to the notice of Nick executives, and Borst and DiRaffaele soon had a bun in the oven (so to speak).

Breadwinners also marked a full-scale return to the "farts and boogers" grossfests that Nickelodeon knew kids always loved. Butt jokes, flatulence, toilet humor, and some of the grossest bread recipes ever conceived grace this series, along with horrible puns and some of the weirdest storylines in animation. Of course, kids aged 6-11 were absolutely thrilled, and another bold experiment by the kids' network paid off.

NICK-NACK NO. 709

We now present *Breadwinners*, two talking ducks that fly around a watery planet in a rocket van delivering bread while avoiding trouble. Sometimes. Hey, it's a living, right? Nick had yet another creator-driven hit.

Nickelodeon continued to make quality preschool shows heading into the middle of the decade. Along with the popular *Bubble Guppies*, Nick gave the younger set a magical blue friend whose magic made words and letters fun. In *Wallykazam!* Wally Trollman lives in a forest populated by denizens from the world of fairy tales; ogres, sprites, fairies, and goblins hang out with him. His best friend is a giant named Gina, his mischievous antagonist is named Bobgoblin, and his pet dragon Norville flies Wally to any enchanted place he wishes to visit.

Wally owns a magical forked stick that has the power to bring words to life. Each episode finds Wally bringing his powers to a specific letter, rhyme, or even a sound. These are transformed into "magic words" that carry the theme for the rest of the episode. Sometimes, however, Wally's magic stick tends to backfire, with hilarious results for the toddlers to enjoy. The show is interactive, instructive, and one of the best preschool shows for teaching literacy skills ever developed. There are also strong lessons about the values of friendship.

The show has earned rave reviews from critics. *Common Sense Media* commented that *Wallykazam!* "craftily disguises solid lessons in basic literacy skills as delightful stories about an endearing young troll and his forest friends. ... This exceptional, comical preschool series is so well designed that parents will want to tune in with their kids, which will help parents reinforce the curriculum's points."

Kids loved it even more. When *Wallykazam!* first aired in February 2014, the show garnered Nickelodeon its highest rated premiere for a preschool show in the past 10 years. Nickelodeon didn't need a magic stick for this sort of success; all the network had to do was give the same commitment to quality and imagination that made *Blue's Clues*, *Dora the Explorer*, and *Bubble Guppies* special.

Wallykazam!

NICK-NACK NO. 281

Wally Trollman has a magic stick. It brings any word to life real quick. His pet dragon Norville happily yips, and accompanies Wally on magical trips. *Wallykazam!* quickly became a hit with fairy-tale-loving preschoolers.

Nickelodeon went deep in the heart of Texas for its next live-action sitcom, *Bella and the Bulldogs*. Bella is a cute young teen with a passion for football, and the Bulldogs are the high school team she quarterbacks. The Bulldogs were in for a rough season until Isabella "Bella" Dawson made the jump from the cheerleading squad to the varsity team by dint of her awesome arm. Bella gradually wins the team over, even getting her own "lock her" in the team's dressing room.

But Bella is more than just a jock; she's a lively girl who also loves to hang out with BFFs Sophie and Pepper, inspiring them both to chase dreams of their own. Between going to school dances with her main crush Kyle, becoming a confidant to star player Troy Dixon, and leading the Bulldogs to hard-won victories, Bella has the kind of life any Nick viewer would enjoy. As Bella herself would say, "Shabooya!"

NICK-NACK NO. 947

Bella and the Bulldogs was created by two alumni from the Nickelodeon 2009/2010 Writing Program, Gabriel Garza and Jonathan Butler.

NICK-NACK NO. 433

Harvey Beaks creator C.H. Greenblatt began his career in advertising, but had been drawn to animation since childhood. He responded to a Nickelodeon ad in *Animation Magazine* looking for creative people, and in a few months, was hired as a freelance character designer.

Bored? Looking for excitement? Take a run around magical Bigbark Woods with Harvey Beaks and company. Harvey is a sweet-natured neatness freak, a lovable little bird that really needs to loosen up a bit. Luckily, his impish friends Fee and Foo love nothing more than to drag Harvey into crazy adventures, wild escapades and, yup, lots of trouble.

Whether it's outfoxing Randl, the ill-tempered raccoon, having it out with a gang of squirrels, or foolishly pressing the Mystic Door Bell, Harvey and his pals never have a dull moment (for the record, Fee is the scarlet-haired moptop, and Foo is the one with the squiggly cowlick).

C.H. Greenblatt, long-time writer on *SpongeBob SquarePants* brought this wacky new show to Nick under the original title "Bad Seeds." Art director Bill Dely and his crew of background artists created some of the most exquisite settings ever to grace a Nickelodeon series. The lush, watercolor palette plays strikingly against the simple-but-zany character designs.

As Nickelodeon reached the middle of a new decade, the brand never looked stronger, and audiences could not get enough of the fresh ideas tumbling out of their network of choice. Nick's ongoing commitment to artists and creators makes *Harvey Beaks* a perfect example of Nick's investment in fun, original, creator-driven series.

THIS NEW SERIES IS POISED TO BECOME ANOTHER ACCLAIMED MILESTONE OF NICKELODEON ANIMATION.

Working with studios, artists, and creators beyond its home base in Burbank, Nickelodeon has also collaborated with some of the brightest and best talents all over the world. This allows the network to stay atop of new directions in kids' programming and identify the trends that appeal to its audience of all ages.

What do a pig, a goat, a banana and a cricket have in common? They're destined to become the next big hit for Nickelodeon. With an eye on the future, the network hired two "alternative" comic book artists and gave them free reign to create a surrealistic series that would truly look like no other. Johnny Ryan and Dave Cooper developed a show about four friends who happen to be the stars of *Pig Goat Banana Cricket*.

Cooper is an award-winning comic artist best known for his work *Weasel*, while Ryan revels in the tradition of Robert Crumb, S. Clay Wilson, Robert Griffin, and the great underground comix artists of the past. Cooper and Ryan were not strangers to Nickelodeon; from 1993–2007 they collaborated on stories for *Nickelodeon Magazine*.

Pig Goat Banana Cricket (the cricket was originally a mantis in the pilot) is a surrealistic feast animated in a throwback style that suggests the cartoons of Max Fleischer crossed with 60s psychedelic art. The new series is poised to become another acclaimed milestone of Nickelodeon animation.

NICK-NACK NO. 977

Alternate comic book artists Dave Cooper and Johnny Ryan created *Pig Goat Banana Cricket*. The pilot, directed by Nick Cross, went viral in 2012 and, after further development, got a green light for a series in 2014.

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As for the future Nickelodeon is no longer simply a block of programming, a TV channel, nor the centerpiece to a suite of cable networks. It's an all-encompassing media company with a mission to entertain and empower kids everywhere.

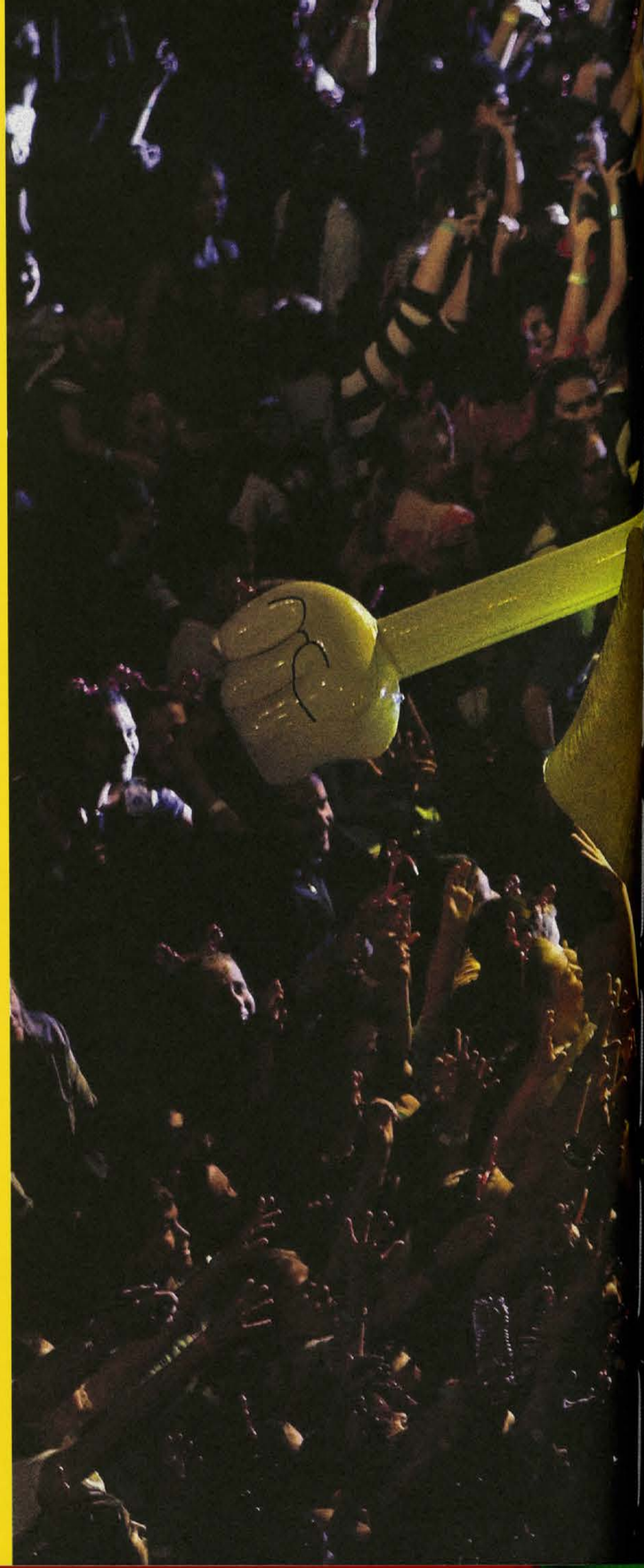
"We are really aware that the audience is finding our content and characters on every device, service, and touchpoint that they come across," says James Stephenson, Nick's senior vice president of digital content development. His group includes overseeing nick.com and interactive outlets like the Nick app, that incorporates both the TV viewing experience and games. "The way the audience finds us is going to be on demand, with lots of different content types, games, shows ... and linear TV is still there in the mix."

Development across all platforms is now clearly a partnership between the creator and Nick's experienced in-house team. "It's great when you have a creator willing to partner with a development person who's in charge of creating a theme park ride," notes Stephenson. "With games, there's a certain amount of expertise around the game mechanics and what developers do, but there's always got to be some partnership."

"A lot of the younger creators we are bringing in are naturally conversant with the whole idea," says Stephenson. "For example, the *Breadwinners* creators had no problem telling us what their games should look like. We now bring in a new creator to make a special bible for interactive, defining which elements went into the TV show and what should go into the web series. We sit down with the games development team, and the series creator now has a platform to jump off and say, 'Well, here's a part of the world we didn't explore on the TV series.' That's been our reinvention of the development process, not thinking about the characters from a 'TV first' perspective. When you come in as a creator, part of your job today is to engage all of these operations and be the person who holds the vision true."

NICK-NACK NO. 103

Whether he's surfing waves or crowds, SpongeBob SquarePants is always having fun. Easily the biggest animated star of the century, SpongeBob has become the face of Nickelodeon's surefire, creator-friendly approach.



AS NICKELODEON ROCKETS INTO THE FUTURE OF THE VAST WORLD OF KIDS' ENTERTAINMENT, THE BRAND CONTINUES TO PLACE ITS GREATEST VALUES ON BRILLIANTLY ORIGINAL STORYTELLING, UNEXPECTED AND RULE-BENDING DESIGNS, FEARLESSNESS FOR THE FUNNY, AND MEMORABLE EXPERIENCES AT ALL LEVELS OF KID-INSPIRED MEDIA. WHATEVER THE MEDIUM FOR CONTENT– FROM THE TUBE TO THE LATEST DIGITAL DEVICE– NICK IS GUIDED BY ITS FOUNDING DNA:

NICK-NACK NO. 997

"Nick will continue to be the leader in kids' entertainment," says Russell Hicks. "I can't predict where kids will be in 10 years, but I can tell you Nickelodeon will be right there with them."

CREATE A WORLD FOR KIDS, BY KIDS.

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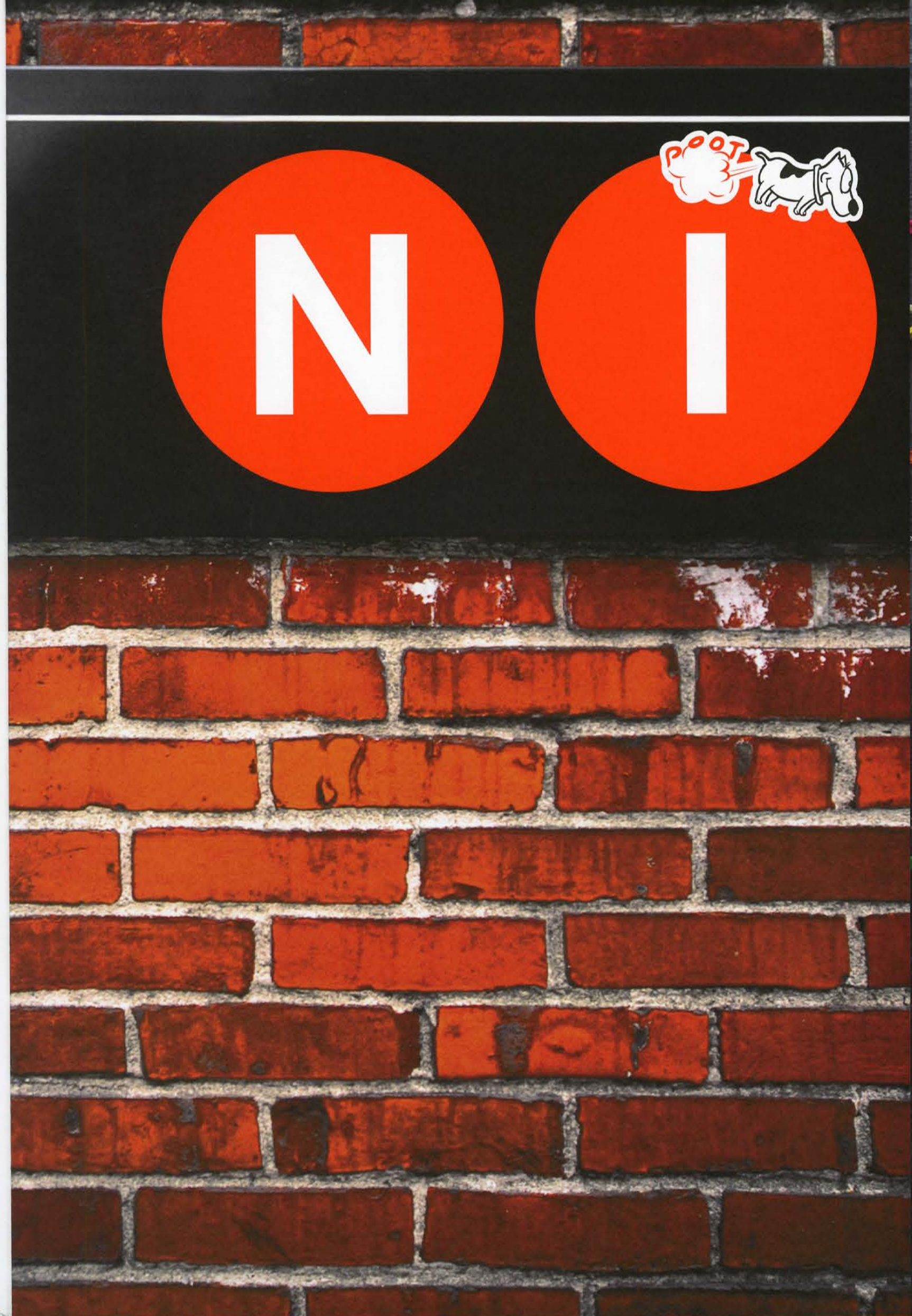
Copywriters, Struck

History of Nickelodeon



1994
Gullah Gullah Island

1996
Blue's Clues

1994
The Big Help

1994
Aaahh!!! Real Monsters
All That
Allegra's Window
My Brother and Me
The Secret World of Alex Mack

1996
Action League
Hey Arnold!
KaBlam!
Kenan & Kel
The Mystery Fil
Space Cases

1996
Harriet the Spy

EXPLAINS
IT ALL
1996
Blue's Clues
1997
The Angry Beavers
Figure It Out
The Journey
of Allen Strange
1996
Action League Now!
Hey Arnold!
KaBlam!
Kenan & Kel
The Mystery Files of Shelby Woo
Space Cases
1996
Harriet the Spy
1997
Good Burger

C
K
HEY ARNOLD

History of Nickelodeon

NICK

- Nickelodeon
- Nick Jr.
- Nickelodeon Movies
- Nick Virtual Worlds
- Nick@Nite
- Nick Brand and Events
- Nickelodeon Games and Sports
- NickMom
- TeenNick
- NickToons

1979
Nickel Flicks
Pinwheel

1980
Special Delivery

1981
You Can't Do That on Television

1982
Against the Odds

1986
Double Dare

1982
Against the Odds

1986
Double Dare

1987
Finders Keepers

1988
Don't Just Sit There

1988
Eureeka's Castle

1989
Hey Dude
Make the Grade

1990
Wild & Crazy Kids

1991
Clarissa Explains It All
Doug
Get the Picture
Hillside/Fifteen
The Ren & Stimpy Show
Rugrats
Salute Your Shorts
Welcome Freshmen

1992
Are You Afraid of the Dark?
GUTS
Nick News
Roundhouse

1992
Ghostwriter

1993
The Adventures of Pete & Pete
Legends of the Hidden Temple
Rocko's Modern Life
Weinerville

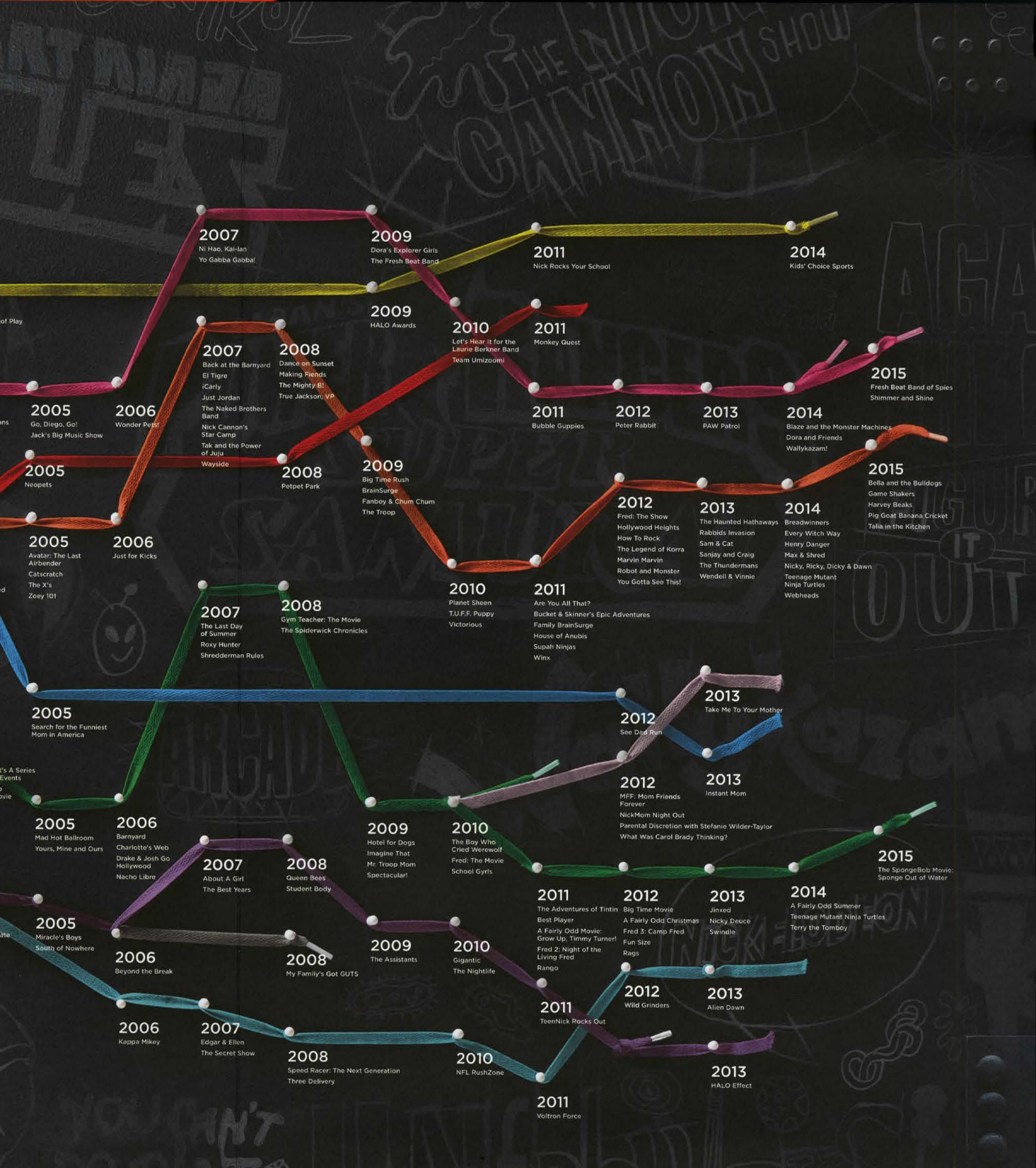
1994
Aaahh!!! Real Monsters
All That
Allegra's Window
My Brother and Me
The Secret World of Alex Mack

1994
The Big Help

1994
Gullah Gullah Island

1988
Kids Pick the President
Kids' Choice Awards

1996
Blue's Clues
2001
Oswald
2002
Max & Ruby
2003
Moose and Zee
2004
Worldwide Day of Play
1996
Action League Now!
Hey Arnold!
KaBlam!
Kenan & Kel
The Mystery Files of Shelby Woo
Space Cases
1997
The Angry Beavers
Figure It Out
The Journey of Allen Strange
1998
Animorphs
CatDog
Cousin Skeeter
Oh Yeah! Cartoons
The Wild Thornberrys
You're On
1999
Little Bill
2000
Dora the Explorer
2001
The Fairly OddParents
Invader Zim
Taina
2002
The Adventures of Jimmy Neutron: Boy Genius
ChalkZone
The Nick Cannon Show
Scaredy Camp
2003
All Grown Up!
My Life as a Teenage Robot
Romeo!
2004
The Backyardigans
Blue's Room
2005
Go, Diego, Go!
Jack's Big Music Show
2006
Wonder Pets!
1999
100 Deeds For Eddie McDowd
The Amanda Show
SpongeBob SquarePants
2000
As Told by Ginger
The Brothers Garcia
Caitlin's Way
Noah Knows Best
Slime Time Live
2004
Danny Phantom
Drake & Josh
Littleburg
Ned's Declassified
Unfabulous
2005
Neopets
2003
Degrassi: The Next Generation
Girls v. Boys
2004
Lemony Snicket's A Series of Unfortunate Events
The SpongeBob SquarePants Movie
2005
Avatar: The Last Airbender
Catscratch
The X's
Zoey 101
2006
Just for Kicks
2002
Degrassi
2005
Search for the Funniest Mom in America
1998
The Rugrats Movie
2000
Rugrats in Paris: The Movie
Snow Day
2003
Rugrats Go Wild
1996
Harriet the Spy
1997
Good Burger
1999
A Walk In Your Shoes
2001
Jimmy Neutron: Boy Genius
2002
Clockstoppers
Hey Arnold!: The Movie
The Last Airbender
The Wild Thornberrys Movie
2005
Mad Hot Ballroom
Yours, Mine and Ours
2006
Barnyard
Charlotte's Web
Drake & Josh Go Hollywood
Nacho Libre
2004
Best Friend's Date
O'Grady
2005
Miracle's Boys
South of Nowhere
2006
Beyond the Break
2006
Kappa Mikey



2005
Go, Diego, Go!
Jack's Big Music Show
2006
Wonder Pets!
2007
Ni Hao, Kai-lan
Yo Gabba Gabba!
2009
Dora's Explorer Girls
The Fresh Beat Band
2009
HALO Awards
2010
Let's Hear It for the Laurie Berkner Band
Team Umizoomi
2011
Nick Rocks Your School
2011
Monkey Quest
2014
Kids' Choice Sports
2005
Neopets
2007
Back at the Barnyard
El Tigre
iCarly
Just Jordan
The Naked Brothers Band
Nick Cannon's Star Camp
Tak and the Power of Juju
Wayside
2008
Dance on Sunset
Making Fiends
The Mighty B!
True Jackson, VP
2008
Petpet Park
2009
Big Time Rush
BrainSurge
Fanboy & Chum Chum
The Troop
2011
Bubble Guppies
2012
Peter Rabbit
2013
PAW Patrol
2014
Blaze and the Monster Machines
Dora and Friends
Wallykazam!
2015
Fresh Beat Band of Spies
Shimmer and Shine
2005
Avatar: The Last Airbender
Catscratch
The X's
Zoey 101
2006
Just for Kicks
2010
Planet Sheen
T.U.F.F. Puppy
Victorious
2011
Are You All That?
Bucket & Skinner's Epic Adventures
Family BrainSurge
House of Anubis
Supah Ninjas
Winx
2012
Fred: The Show
Hollywood Heights
How To Rock
The Legend of Korra
Marvin Marvin
Robot and Monster
You Gotta See This!
2013
The Haunted Hathaways
Rabbids Invasion
Sam & Cat
Sanjay and Craig
The Thundermans
Wendell & Vinnie
2014
Breadwinners
Every Witch Way
Henry Danger
Max & Shred
Nicky, Ricky, Dicky & Dawn
Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
Webheads
2015
Bella and the Bulldogs
Game Shakers
Harvey Beaks
Pig Goat Banana Cricket
Talia in the Kitchen
2007
The Last Day of Summer
Roxy Hunter
Shredderman Rules
2008
Gym Teacher: The Movie
The Spiderwick Chronicles
2005
Search for the Funniest Mom in America
2012
See Dad Run
2013
Take Me To Your Mother
2012
MFF: Mom Friends Forever
NickMom Night Out
Parental Discretion with Stefanie Wilder-Taylor
What Was Carol Brady Thinking?
2013
Instant Mom
2005
Mad Hot Ballroom
Yours, Mine and Ours
2006
Barnyard
Charlotte's Web
Drake & Josh Go Hollywood
Nacho Libre
2007
About A Girl
The Best Years
2008
Queen Bees
Student Body
2009
Hotel for Dogs
Imagine That
Mr. Troop Mom
Spectacular!
2010
The Boy Who Cried Werewolf
Fred: The Movie
School Gyrls
2011
The Adventures of Tintin
Best Player
A Fairly Odd Movie: Grow Up, Timmy Turner!
Fred 2: Night of the Living Fred
Rango
2012
Big Time Movie
A Fairly Odd Christmas
Fred 3: Camp Fred
Fun Size
Rags
2013
Jinxed
Nicky Deuce
Swindle
2014
A Fairly Odd Summer
Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
Terry the Tomboy
2015
The SpongeBob Movie: Sponge Out of Water
2005
Miracle's Boys
South of Nowhere
2006
Beyond the Break
2008
My Family's Got GUTS
2009
The Assistants
2010
Gigantic
The Nightlife
2011
TeenNick Rocks Out
2012
Wild Grinders
2013
Alien Dawn
2006
Kappa Mikey
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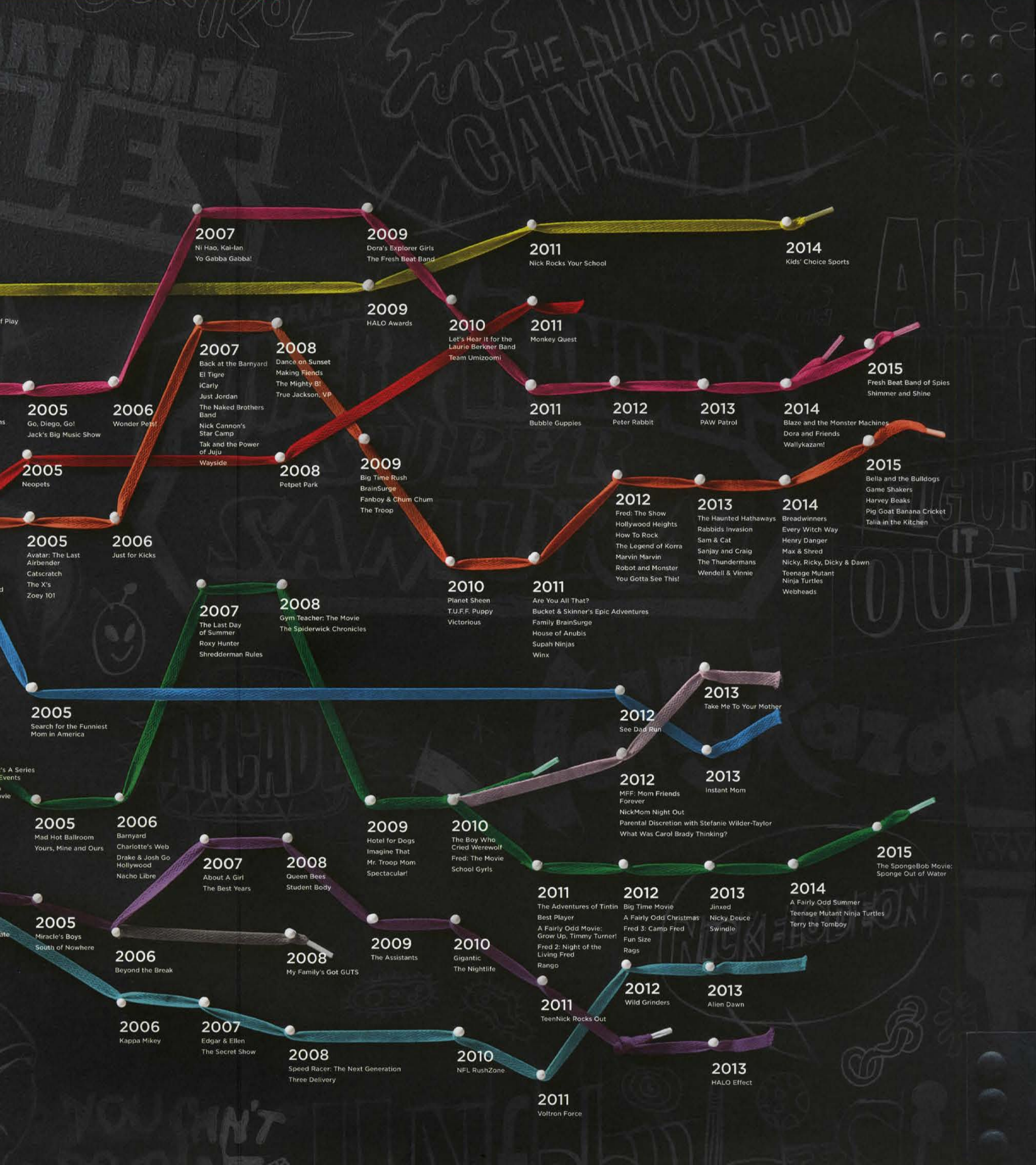
Edgar & Ellen
The Secret Show
2008
Speed Racer: The Next Generation
Three Delivery
2010
NFL RushZone
2011
Voltron Force
2013
HALO Effect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Barnyard
Charlotte's Web
Drake & Josh Go Hollywood
Nacho Libre
2007
About A Girl
The Best Years
2008
Queen Bees
Student Body
2009
Hotel for Dogs
Imagine That
Mr. Troop Mom
Spectacular!
2010
The Boy Who Cried Werewolf
Fred: The Movie
School Gyrls
2011
The Adventures of Tintin
Best Player
A Fairly Odd Movie: Grow Up, Timmy Turner!
Fred 2: Night of the Living Fred
Rango
2012
Big Time Movie
A Fairly Odd Christmas
Fred 3: Camp Fred
Fun Size
Rags
2013
Jinxed
Nicky Deuce
Swindle
2014
A Fairly Odd Summer
Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
Terry the Tomboy
2015
The SpongeBob Movie: Sponge Out of Water
2005
Miracle's Boys
South of Nowhere
2006
Beyond the Break
2008
My Family's Got GUTS
2009
The Assistants
2010
Gigantic
The Nightlife
2011
TeenNick Rocks Out
2012
Wild Grinders
2013
Alien Dawn
2006
Kappa Mikey
2007
Edgar & Ellen
The Secret Show
2008
Speed Racer: The Next Generation
Three Delivery
2010
NFL RushZone
2011
Voltron Force
2013
HALO Effect

Exit
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